Greenes farewell to Folly.

SENT TO COVRTIERS AND Schollers as a preſident to warne them from the vaine delights that drawes youth on to repentance.

Sero ſed ſeriò

Robert Greene

Vtriuſque Academiæ in Artibus magiſter.

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1591.

TO THE HONORABLE MINDED GENTLEMAN,

Robert Carey, Esquire:

Robert Greene wisheth as many good fortunes as the honor of his thoughts doe merite.

HAuing waded (noble minded Courtier) through the censures of many both Honourable and worshipfull, in cõmitting the credite of my bookes to their honourable opinions, as I haue found some of them not onely honourably to patronize my workes, but curteously to passe ouer my vnskilfull presumption with silence, so generally I am indebted to all Gentlemen that with fauors haue ouerslipt my follies: Follies I tearme them, because their subiects haue bene superficiall, and their intents amorous, yet mixed with such morrall principles, that the precepts of vertue seemed to craue pardon for all

thoſe vaine opinions loue ſet downe in hir periods. Seeing then (worthie *Mæcenas* of letters) my workes haue beene counted follies, and follies the fruit of youth, many yeeres hauing bitten me with experience, and age growing on bidding mee *Petere grauiora*, to ſatisfie the hope of my friends, and to make the worlde priuie to my priuate reſolution, I haue made a booke called my *Farewell to Follies*: wherein as I renounce loue for a foole, and vanitie as a vaine too vnfit for a Gentleman, ſo I diſcouer the generall abuſes that are ingrafted in the mindes of Courtiers and ſchollers, with a Colling Card of counſell, ſuppreſſing thoſe actions that ſtraie from the golden meane of vertue. But (right worſhipfull) ſome are ſo peremptorie in their opinions, that if Diogenes ſtirre his ſtumpes, they will ſaie, it is to mocke dancers, not to be wanton, that if the fox preach, tis to ſpie which is the fatteſt gooſe, not to be a ghoſtly father, that if *Greene* write *his Farewell to Follie*, tis to blind the world with follie, the more to ſhadow his owne follie. My reply to theſe thought ſearchers is this, I cannot

Martinize,

Martinize, ſweare by my faie in a pulpit, & rap out gogs wounds in a tauerne, faine loue when I haue no charitie, or proteſt an open reſolution of good, when I intend to be priuately ill, but in all publike proteſtations my wordes and my deedes iumpe in one ſimpathie, and my tongue and my thoughts are relatiues. But omitting theſe digreſſions (right worſhipful) to my book, which as it is the farewell to my follies, ſo it is the laſt I meane euer to publiſh of ſuch ſuperficiall labours, which I haue aduentured to ſhroude vnder the ſhelter of your worſhippes patronage, as vnder his wing, whoſe generall loue bought with honorable deſerts, may defend it from the iniurie of euerie enuious enemie. I can ſhadowe my preſumption with no other excuſe but this, that ſeeking to finde out ſome one courtier, whoſe vertuous actions had made him the hope of many honours, at whoſe feete I might laie downe the follies of my youth, & bequeath to him all the profitable fruits of my enſuing age, finding none that either fame could warrant me, or my own priuat fancie perſvvade to be of more

hope then your ſelfe, I ſet downe my reſt, and ventured boldly on your worſhips fauour, which if as I haue found before, I obtaine now, I ſhall thinke my ſelfe as fortunate in getting ſo honorable a patrone for my new indeuours, as vnhappie for blemiſhing my forepaſſed youth with ſuch friuolous labours. And thus hoping my honeſt reſolution to do well, ſhal be countenanſt with your worſhips curteous acceptance, I commit you to the Almightie.

Your worſhips in all

humble ſeruice,

ROBERT GREENE.

TO THE GENTLEMEN-

Students of both Vniuerſities health.

Gentlemen and Studentes (my olde frie ndes and companions) I preſented you alate with my Mourning garment, howe you cenſure of the cloth or cut I knowe not, but the Printer hath paſt th e mall out of his ſhop, and the Pedler founde them too deare for his packe, that he was faine to bargain for the life of Tomliuolin to wrappe vp his ſweete powders in thoſe vnſauorie papers : If my garment did any Gentleman good I am glad, if it offended none I am proud, if good man find fault that hath his wit in his eyes, and can checke what he can not amend, miſlike it, I am careles, for Diogenes hath taught me, that to kicke an aſſe when he ſtrikes, were to ſmell of the aſſe for meddling with the aſſe. Hauing therefore Gentlemen (in my opinion) mourned long enough for the miſdeedes of my youth, leaſt I ſhoulde ſeeme too Phariſaicall in my faſtes, or like our deare Engliſh breethren that meaſure their praiers by the houre glaſſe, fall a ſleepe in preaching of repentance. I haue nowe left of the intent, and am come to the effect, and after my mourning preſent you with my Farewell to follies, an vltimum vale to al youthful vanities: wiſhing al Gentlemen as wel Courtiers as Schollers, to take view of thoſe blemiſhes that diſhonor youth with the quaint ſhew of pleaſant delights. What a glorious ſhew would the Spring preſent if the beautie of hir floures were not nipt with the froſtes? how would Autumne boaſt of hir fruites if ſhe were not diſguiſed with the fall of the leafe, and how would the vertues of youth ſhine (poliſhed with the ripe conceit of wit) if they were not eclipſed with the cloudes of vanity. Then ſweete companions and louemates of learning, looke into my Farewel, and you ſhall find the poiſons which infect young yeares, and turning but the leafe reade the Anti dotes to preuent the force of ſuch deadly confections. Lay open my life in your thought and beware by my loſſe, ſcorne not in your age what you haue learned in your Accidence, though ſtale yet as ſure as check, *Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum*. Such wags as haue bene wantons with me, and haue marched in the Mercers booke to pleaſe their Miſtris eye with their brauerie, that as the frolike phraſes haue made the tauerne to ſweat with riotous expences, that haue ſpent their wits in courting of their ſweetehearts, and emptied their purſes by being too prodigall, let them at laſt looke backe to the follies of their

their youth, and with me say farewell vnto all such vanities. But those young nouices that haue not yet lost the maidenhead of their innocency, nor haue not heard the melody of such alluring Syrens, let them read that they may loth, and that seeing into the depth of their follie, they may the more deteſt that whose poysoned sweetenesse they neuer tasted. Thus generally I woulde wish all to beware by me to say with me farewell to follie. Then shoulde I glorie that my seede sowne with so much good will shoulde yeeld a harueſt of so great aduantage. But by your leaue Gentlemen, some ouer curious will carpe and say, that if I were not beyond, I would not be so bold to teach my betters their dutie, and to shew them the Sunne that haue brighter eyes than my selfe, well Diogenes tolde Alexander of his follie and yet he was not a King. Others will flout and ouer read euerie line with a frumpe and say tis scuruie, when they themselues are such scabd lades that they are like to dye of the fazion, but if they come to write or publish anie thing in print, it is either distild out of ballets or borrowed of Theologicall poets, which for their calling and grauitie, being loth to haue anie prophane phāphlets passe vnder their hand, get some other Batillus to set his name to their verses: Thus is the asse made proud by this vnder hande brokerie. And he that can not write true Englishe without the helpe of Clearkes of parish Churches, will needes make him selfe the father of interludes. O tis a iollie matter when a man hath a familiar stile and can endite a whole yeare and neuer be beholding to art? but to bring Scripture to proue any thing he sayes, and kill it dead with the text in a trifling subiect of loue, I tell you is no small peece of cunning. As for example two louers on the stage arguing one an other of vnkindnesse, his Mistris runnes ouer him with this canonicall sentence, A mans conscience is a thousande witnesses, and hir knight againe excuseth him selfe with that saying of the Apostle, Loue couereth the multitude of sinnes, I thinke this was but simple abusing of the Scripture. In charitie be it spoken I am perswaded the sexten of Saint Giles without Creeple gate, would haue beene ashamed of such blasphemous Rhetoricke. But not to dwell in the imperfection of these dunces, or trouble you with a long commentarie of such witlesse cockescombes, Gentlemen I humbly intreat pardon for my selfe, that you will fauour my farewell and take the presentation of my booke to your iudiciall insights in good part, which courtesie if I find at your hands as I little dout of it, I shall rest yours as euer I haue done.

Robert Greene.

Greene his farewell to Follie.

WHen the state of Italie was pestered with the mutinous factions of the Guelphes and Ghibellines, so that the common wealth groned vnder the burden of their seditious tumults, and the Church infected with sundrie schismaticall opinions, was stained with that blemish of dissention. Florence, a citie greatly molested with this ciuill controuersie, in sted of palmes that presented peace, was stored with armour that denounced warres, the stréets that were a mart for the trafficke of merchants, serued for a place wherein to martiall souldiers, the Senate went not in roabes of purple to challenge reuerence, but in coates of stéele to maintaine their safetie: age, honour nor religion bare no priuiledge in their foreheads, but the nobilitie with ambition and the commons with enuie, so dissented in their seuerall thoughts, that the particular ruine of the Citie, and the generall subuersion of the weale publique was daily expected. Yet amidst these broiles the house of the Farneze so behaued themselues with such equal proportion, that they were neither friends to the Guelphs nor foes to the Ghibellins, but with an indifferent poise of affectiõs, countermanded the factious mutiny of those two mortall enimies. The chiefe of these was Ieronimo Farneze, a noble man, honorable for his parentage, and honoured for his vertue, one that in his youth armed his

actions with prowesse, and in his age made a proofe of his life by wisdome, who discovering the miserie of time by experience, founde that sweeter was the deaw that dropt from peace, than the showers that powred downe from wars, that the garland of Mercurie was more precious than the helmet of Mars, that quiet and content soner rested vnder the marble altar of Pallas, than vnder the siluer targets of Bellona, not that the noble man thought it dishonorable to be martiall, but that he counted it prodigall to be factious: to auoide therefore all suspition that might insue by his residence in so troublesome a Citie, setting his household affaires in some good order, accompanied with his wife, three daughters, and foure young Gentlemen, allied vnto him by affinitie, hee departed from Florence, seated himselfe in a farme of his about sixe miles distant from Vienna: the eldest of his daughters was named Margaret, the seconde Fraunces, the youngest Katherine, all which as ioyning in a sympathie of their parents propagation, were beholding to Nature for beauty, to Fortune for wealth, and to the Gods for wisedome and vertue: the young Gentlemen were these, Seignior Peratio, seignior Bernardine, seignior Cosimo, and messieur Benedetto, all as I said before, allied to Farneze by affinitie, and therfore honorable, and directing the course of their liues after his compasse, and therefore vertuous. These thus associated both in nature and nourture, accompanied the olde Countie to his house, where arryuing they found a Grange place by scituation melancholie, as seated in the middest of a thicket, fitter for one giuen to metaphysial contemplation than for such yong Gentlemen, as desired sooner to daunce with Venus, than to dreame with Saturne, whose thoughts aimed not at the stoicke content of Pythagoras, but at an exteriour conceite of honest pleasure, which contrarie to their expectation in such a centurie or Countrie cottage,

they

they founde for Ieronimo Farneze, seeing the picture of discontent shadowed in their forheads, conceiuing this frowarde humour to come, for that the place of their abode was so solempnely seated, beganne at the enteraunce into the base Court to vse these words.

Gentlemen, the learned and wise worldlinges, whome experience and wisedome hath priuiledged to censure rightly of the due expence of time, haue thought with the Phisition, that as the stomacke hath his office strengthened as well with the iuyce of bitter wormwood as with the sap of swéete liquerice: so the minde oft steppeth as soone to content by beeing passionate as pleasant, desire hangs not alwaies on the héeles of delight, man hath his time to meditate, and holy writ tels vs, that as we haue a daie for mirth, so we haue a daie to mourne, Salomon whose content passed al proportion of measure, counted all things vanitie that stoped to the centre of the earth, Alexander amidst al ỹ Embassadors at Babylon, stole thrée dayes to bée solitarie, Philip woulde bée put in remembrance of his mortalitie: and we Gentlemen, that haue liued pleasantlie at Florence wearing out time with vanitie, may now refine our senses dulled with the tast of sundrie vaine obiects, and for a wéeke or two betake our selues to this solitarie place, wherein I thinke to finde no other pleasure but a swéete meditation and friendly conference of the vaine suppose of such as thinke none Philosophers but Epicures, and none religious but Atheists. Thus Gentlemen, I appoint your penaunce, and therefore shew me your opinion by your countenance. Seignior Peratio who was nephew to Ieronimo, made aunswere for the rest and saide, they were all content, wherewith the olde Countis leading the waie entered the house, where finding all thinges in a readines they went to dinner: the fresh aire had procured good appetite, that little talke past till they had ended their repast, dinner

being done, counting it Phisicke to sit a while, the olde Countesse spying on the finger of seignior Cosimo a ring with a deaths head ingrauen, circled with this posie, Gressus ad vitam, demanded whether hee adorde the signet for profit or pleasure, seignior Cosimo speaking in truth as his conscience wild him, tolde her that it was a fauour which a Gentlewoman had bestowed vpon him, and that onely he wore it for her sake. Then, quoth the countesse, tis a whetstone to sharp fancie: if it be madam quoth Cosimo, I am not so olde but I may loue: nor so young sir, quoth shee, but you may learne by that to leaue such folly as loue: no doubt nature works nothing vaine, the Lapidarie cuts not a stone, but it hath some vertue: men weare not iems only to please the sight, but to be defensiues by their secret operatiõs against perils, & so seignior Cosimo wold I haue you vse the gentlewomans fauour, not for a whetstone to further folly, but for a cooling card to inordinate vanities. Themistocles wore in his shield the picture of a storke, his motto Antipelargein, for that he would not be stained with ingratitude. Socrates had but one toie in his house, and that was the counterfait of patience, for that he had a shrew to his wife: By your leaue madame (quoth Cosimo) had not Socrates coũterfait also a sentẽce: yes answered Farneze, but my wife plaies like the Priest that at his Eleuatio left out his Memento, the motto was this, Neque hæc sufficit, meaning patience was as good a medicine to cure a waspish woman of sullenes, as an ants egge in strop for him that is troubled with the Sciatica. The Gentlemen laught at the drie frumps of Farneze, and the Countesse for that she had talkt of patience, tooke it for a president, and prosecuted her intent in this maner. Iest howe you please Gentlemen, still I saie that well cannot be gainsayd how the image of death figured in Cosimos ring, should be a glasse whereby to direct his actions, that the pagans who builde their blisse in the

swẽt

ſwéete conceit of Fame, vſed the picture of death as a reſtraint to all forward follies. Alexander when he named himſelfe the ſon of Iupiter, was reuoked from hereſie by the ſight of a dead mans ſcull that Caliſtenes preſented to him in a caſket. Auguſtus Cæſar ſet on the doze of his banketting houſe the ſcalpe of a dead man, leaſt extremitie ſhould turne delight to vice: ſo ſeignior Coſimo, vſe you your miſtres fauor as a benefit to profit the minde, not as a toy to pleaſe fancie. Coſimo was driuen into a dump with this ſodain inſinuation of the counteſſe, as in deed he ſtood like the picture of ſilence, whereat Bernardin ſmiling made the Counteſſe this anſwere.

I cannot denie madame, but you ſay well, yet your cenſure is a little too peremptorie, neither can I gainſay but ſuch a reſolution would do well in age, whoſe ſappe ſhronke from ỹ branches, cõforts the water, but affords no bloſſoms, your hairs being ſiluer had a cõmons vnto death, & therefore to be armed with deuotion, our yeres growen & budding forth a reſtles deſire to pleſure, which if we ſhould cut off with a continuall remembrance of death, we ſhuld preuent time & metamorphoſe our ſelues by conceit into a contrary ſhape: the Aſtronomer by long ſtaring at the ſtars forgets the globe at his fẽt, ſo feareful was Phaeton of the ſigne in the zodiacke, that he forgat his courſe: & ſo would you haue the delight of youth daſht with the ſight of a death head, ỹ laying aſide al recreation, we ſhould fall to be flat Saturniſts. By this doctrine madam, you would erect againe the Academie of the ſtoicks, & make young men either apathoi to liue without paſſions, or els ſo holy to die without ſin: the gentlemen were glad that Bernardino had made ſuch an anſwere, & Farneze to draw them farther into talke, told his wife ỹ ſhe thought ſhe was driuen to a non plus: no ſir (qd ſhe) but the gentleman miſtakes me, for I meane not to haue him ſo holy as to liue without ſinne, but ſo honeſt as to liue without follies, which our Florentins

shrowd vnder the shadowe of youth, that in déede are méere enemies to the glorie of youth. Messieur Benedetto interrupted the countesse, as one amongst al the companie most giuen to follie, for he was a fine courtier and was thus quicke in his replie. I remember madame that Phocion carped at all men that went shod, because he him selfe was euer barefoot. Antisthenes admitted no guest but Geometritians. None supt with Cassius but such as neuer laught, and they which féele your humour must (though not in yeres yet in action) be as old as you, or else they are fondlings. But they which at stood Diogenes tubbe came as well to laugh as to learne, and we that heare, you may sooner fall a slépe than follow your doctrine, for I perceiue vnder this worde folly, you abridge young gentlemen of euerie laudable pleasure and delight, allowing mirth in no measure, vnlesse pourd out after your proportion: As to hunt, to hauke, to daunce, to loue, to go cleanly, or whatsoeuer else that contenteth youth his folly. And thus by an induction you conclude omnia vanitas. The Lady Katherin hearing hir mother so sharply shaken vp by messieur Benedetto protecting hir boldnesse with a modest blushe made this answere: And sir quoth she, they which laught at Diogenes perhaps were as foolishe as he was cynicall: & might with Alexander whatsoeuer they brought take a frumpe for a farewell, my mother sets not downe peremptorie precepts to disallow of honest recreation, but necessary perswasion to diswade men from vanitie, she séekes not with Tullie to frame an Orator in conceipt, with Plato to build a common wealth vpon suppose, nor with Baldessar to figure out a courtier in impossibilities: but séeing the wings of youth trickt vp with follies plumes, séekes to perswade him with Icarus from soaring to high. And I pray you, qd Benedetto, what terme you follies, womens fancies, no sir, quoth she, mens fauours, Silenus asse neuer sawe a wine bottle but he would winch,

and

and you can not heare the name of folly but you muſt frowne, not that you miſlike of it in thought, but that deckt in your pontificalibus a man may ſhape & cetera by your ſhadow: Benedetto let not this bitter blow fall to the ground, but told hir hir Latine was verie bad and worſt placſt: for & cetera was no word of art for a fole, but in dæde he did remember Parrats ſpake not what they thinke, but what they are taught: And ſo, quoth Coſimo, you make a bare exchange with Ladie Katherine for a fole to deliuer a popingay, but in dæde to take hir parte in this, we Florentines, nay more generallie, we Italians ouer wiſe in our owne conceipt, ſtande ſo much vppon wit that follie treading vppon our hæles bids vs oft loke backe vnto repentance: Seignor Farneze taking time by the forehead iumpt in with Coſimo; and ſaid that not onely Italians but other nations whatſoeuer were faultie in that imagination, and that follie was as common as loue, and loue ſo common that he was not a gentleman that was not in loue: and by this argument, quoth Coſimo, you conclude all gentlemen both fooles and louers: I reaſon not anſwered Farneze a coniugatis, but ſeeing we are thus farre entered into the Anatomie of follies, let vs ſpende this afternoone in diſcourſing of the fondneſſe of ſuch our countriemen, as ouergrowne with ſelfe loue drowned themſelues in that follies which all the world giues vnto vs as due: I meane pride, which ſeignor Peratio for that I knowe you alwaies to haue borne the profeſſion of a ſcholler, I commit vnto your charge: Not to me ſir, quoth Peratio, I pray you kæpe decorum, let the Ladie Katherine diſcourſe of that which beſt beſæmeth hir ſexe: for if we may giue credit to men verie ſkilfull and excellent in Chronographie, the firſt patterne of pride came from Eua the moother of women and the miſtreſſe of that faulte: You miſtake the matter, quoth the Ladie Katherine, Eua was obedient

and

and ſimple, following nothing but what hir huſbande foreſhewed and foretaught hir. Let vs leaue women, quoth Farneze, and priuiledge them a little to be proud, onely Signor Peratio touch you the follie of our Italians and we will be ſilent auditours to your good philoſophie: The gentlemen ſetled themſelues in ſilence, which gaue a proofe to Peratio that they agréed to Farnezes requeſt, and therefore he beganne his talke in this manner.

Although gentlemen it hath pleaſed the countie to giue me in charge the diſcourſe of ſuch a weighty matter as the diſcouery of pride, yet I knowe my ſufficiencie ſo farre vnable to performe his requeſt, as of force I muſt craue pardon if either my cenſures be too raſhe or verdict offenſiue: reſting therefore in hope of your courteous patience, thus to the purpoſe. The learned clerkes whoſe experience may auouche their ſayings for Oracles, affirme this folly to diſcend by courſe of propagation, as naturally inſerted into the minde of man ab ipſis incunabilis, ſetting downe by phyſicall reaſons that pride doth poſſeſſe the inward ſenſes of infants, as ſenſum cõmunem & Phantezian before any exterior obiect can delude the ſence with vanitie, which Plato conſidering in his Timæo calleth it Anthropomaſia, the ſcourge of man, as a vice ſo déepely bred by the bone, as it will hardly be roted out of the fleſh, alluding the reaſon that his maiſter Ariſtotle did for the heart which liuing firſt dieth laſt: ſo pride entring at the cradle endeth in the graue. Scipio Affricanus the great whoſe triumphes had filled the ſtrétes of Rome with trophes, being demãded why the ſtate of Rome began to ruinate, what made him forſake the ſenate, why he liued ſolitarie from the ciuill gouernement, why he taſted not the fruites of his foregotten glories: anſwered to all theſe demands briefely, for that Rome waxeth proude, meaning that pride as ill befitteth a crowne as a cottage,

what

what ouerthrewe the house of the Tarquins but pride, what wrought the confusion at Babel but the pride of Nemroth? Pride ouerthrew the pompe of Alexander, and had not pride hatched ambition the Romanes had neuer bewailde the death of Pompey, to repeat a catalogue of infinit examples were friuolous: and therefore leauing this generall discouerie let vs come to a more particular discourse of this follie. Our Florentins which professe themselues to be souldiers, are wedded to this vaine, as men shadowing the verie substance of pride with the two colours of fame and honour: for what attempts they seeke to atchieue by martiall prowesse, what exploites they performe in warres, what daies and nightes they spende in watching either to preuent or preiudice the enemie, still claime the finall cause of those actions to be fame or honour. But who heareth the sundry and seuerall bravados our martialistes make of their strange encounters? how cunningly they ordred their squadrons? how courageously they incountered the enemie? how stoutly they allaied the push of the pike? how strongly they bare the shocke of the horse? what lances they brake? what massacres they made? what stratagemes they performed? what cities they both assaulted and sacked, shall finde this report to tast of selfe loue, and these warlike indeuours to sauour as much of pride as either of fame or honour. But grant their allegations true, they couet to be famous and honourable, yet shall we finde the end of these vertuous imaginatiõs, to be touched a little with the staine of this follie: for the desire of fame aimed with aspiring thoughts soareth so high, that seeking with Phaeton to rule aloft, his very prescription draweth them in a selfe conceipt of their owne glories. Had not Haniball founde pride in the hope of fame, he had neuer

ſcaled the Alpes to beſiege Capua. Had not Alexander bene proude in the glorie of his victories and conqueſtes, he had neuer ſighed that there was but one worlde to ſubdue. Hercules was proude of his labours, Hector of his combats with the Grecians, and to be ſhort, the meaneſt ſouldiour getting either fame or honor by ſundrie hardy and happy attempts, glories ſo much in the glorious reward of his indeuor that willingly he paſſes his proportion, and commeth within the compaſſe of this follie.

Seignior Bernardino, who all his life time, had profeſſed him ſelfe a ſouldiour, ſeeing Peratio ſo peremptorily to appech his profeſſion of pride, made this anſwer. I can not thinke, ſeignior Peratio, but your nativitie being rightly calculated, hath Mercurie ſo predominant, as we may cenſure without offence, that you are farre more bookiſh than wiſe, eſpecially in martiall affaires, whoſe honourable conceit I ſee is ſo farre beyonde the reache of your capacity, that in gazing at a ſtarre you ſtumble at a ſtone, and in aiming particularly at a ſouldiour, you generally load him with the fault of the whole worlde: are you ſo ſimple your ſelfe as to account euerie humour that fitteth man with delight to be pride, that the deſire of fame and honour is nothing elſe but ſelfe loue? Then ſir, let me ſay, that Mineruas owle was proude, for perking vnder hir golden target, and that Apelles boies aimed at ſelfe loue for grinding colours for their maiſters ſhadowes. But it did not preiudice the valour of Themiſtocles to be called coward at the mouth of Ariſtot, becauſe the foole was a fidler and knewe ſcarſe a ſpeare from a ſpigot, neither may ſouldiours take offence to be thought proude at your handes, which neuer ſaw battell but in your booke, and yet I can not deny but there be ſuch fantaſticke martialiſts

as you talke of, whose tongues are more hardie than their hands, and dare soner scale the heauens with a braue than anger a man with a blow: such seignior Peratio as Thrasonically countenance themselues w̄ the title of a souldior, comprehend you within the cōpasse of folly: but those personages which in defense of their country and despight of the enemy, seeke after fame and honour, and glorie in the gaine of such a golden benefit, let them triumphe in their conquests, & delight themselues in recounting those fauours which fame hath bestowed vpon them for their warlike indeuours. But sir, in this discourse of pride, you are partiall & play like Diogenes, who carping at the beggery of Antisthenes, neuer marked the patch on his owne cloake. Sylenus would oft inuey against drunkennes with a bottle of wine in his hande. Thersites appeached Menalcas of deformitie, him selfe being most ilfauoured: and you sir, induce a souldiour as prologue to your comedie of pride, whereas you scholliers ought to be formost in the scene, for he that maketh but a step into the vniuersitie of Padua, where the youth of Florence chiefely flourishe, and with a deepe insight marketh the nature of our Mercurialists, shall find as fit a harbour for pride vnder a scholliers cap as vnder a souldiours helmet, and that as great selfe loue lurketh in a side gowne, as in a short armour. Tell me good seignior Peratio, is not Mercurie as arrogant as Mars is presumptuous? The one is figured with wings as bewraying his aspiring thoughtes, the other pictured in armes, as importing a resolution. Turne they not ouer manie leaues? Reade they not large volumes? Consume they not long time? Apply they not their wits and willes? Some in Astronomy to gaze at the starres, some in Phy sicke to search out the nature of simples, other in the Mathematiks

to worke out metaphysicall experimentes, euerie a particularitie in euerie art: spending all his life to haue the worlde giue a plauditie of their studies. Is not this, seignior Peratio, a tickling humour of selfe loue, that may bring schollers within the compasse of pride? Tullie gadded the stréetes of Rome, that the people might call him pater patriæ. Demostenes take such a conceit of his eloquence, that he walked vp & downe Athens to haue the citizens say, hic est ille Demostenes. Plato was so proude that he scarse thought king Dionysius his fellowe, and not onely in learning, but in life and apparell so neate, that Diogenes séeing a braue cursier richly decked with golden trappers, demanded of him when hee was in Cumæo, as taking the horsse for one of Platoes disciples: and I thinke ye schollers of Padua haue so long read Platoes workes, that ye taste of platoes vanities, I mene not of his philosophy but of his follies: for now he beareth no touch in Padua that can not as well braue it with Plato as reason with Plato, that couet as well to imitate Aristotle in the sumptuousnes of his apparell as the subtilnesse of his arguments, that hath not a tailer as well to picture out his lineaments, as a Stationer to furnish out his librarie: therefore seignior peratio looke to your owne last, measure not the length of an other mans foot by your owne shoe, but ioine the souldier and scholler in one sillogisme, and then the premises equall, conclude how you list. Seignior Farneze and the rest smiled at the sharpe reply of Bernardino, and among the rest messieur Benedetto galled peratio with this gléeke. By my faith gentlemen seignior Bernardino in my opinion hath done well not onely in his defence of a souldier, but in his Satyricall inuectiue against schollers, wresting argumentum coniunctum against Peratio him selfe: I hope sir you

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are a batcheler, and therefore this kinde of phrase giues the lesse offence. Peratio thought to push him with the pike, as hee had hit him with the launce, resembling the fall of Hector, who while he vnarmde Patroclus was vnhorsed himselfe: Peratio somewhat cholerike & not well able to brooke the frump of Benedetto, was thus rough with him: masse courtier I am glad you kepe so good a decorum, as to let the lightnes of your head & lauishnes of your follies so well to agree in code tertio: you take Bernardines part, but when the gentleman ran so merry a descant on the pride of schollers, had he by hap but glanced at the gaudinesse of your apparell, he had spoken farre more reuerently of schollers than he did: for you Florentine Courtiers, nay to be flat, we Florentine Gentlemen, to bring my selfe within the same predicament, discouer our selues to be the verie anatomies of pride: for he that marketh our follies in being passing humorous for the choise of apparell, shall finde Ouids confused chaos to afforde a multitude of defused inuentions. It was obiected to Cæsar for a fault in his youth that he euer vsed to go vntrusk, and we count it a glorie, by a careleſse cloathing of our selues, to be counted malcontent. Sardanapalus was thrust from his empire, for that he was a little effeminate, and we striue to be counted womanish, by keeping of beautie, by curling the haire, by wearing plumes of fethers in our hands, which in warres our ancestors wore on their heads, they feared of men, we to be fauoured of women. Alexander fell in hate of his Macedons, being the monarch of the whole world for wearing a Persian roabe imbroidered with gold, and we Florentines that are scarse maisters of one towne so decke our selues in costly attire, so rich and so rare, that did the Macedons liue and see our follies,

they would grant Alexander to weare his robe without enuy as a priuiledge: yea now a daies Time hath brought pride to such perfection in Italie, that we are almost as fantasticke as the English Gentleman that is painted naked with a paire of sheeres in his hande, as not being resolued after what fashion to haue his coat cut. In truth, quoth Farnezo, to digresse a little from your matter, I haue seene an English Gentleman so defused in his sutes, his doublet being for the weare of Castile, his hose for Venice, his hat for France, his cloake for Germanie, that he seemed no way to be an English man but by the face. And quoth Peratio, to this are we Florentines almost grown: for we must haue our courtesies so cringed, our conges deliuered with such a long accent, our speeches so affected, as comparing our conditions with the liues of our ancestors, we seeme so farre to differ from their former estate, that did Ouid liue, he woulde make a seconde Metamorphosis of our estates. Now masse Benedetto, are not you and the scholler fellowe comperes in follies? Hath not pride taught the one as large principles as the other? Are not Courtiers as proude of their coates as we of our bookes? Nay Gentlemen, not souldiours, schollers and courtiers onely, but all other estates whatsoeuer are comprised within the compasse of our inquisition, and may verie well and rightly be appeached of this folly.

But seignior Peratio, quoth the olde Countesse, what doe you thinke euerie one proud that weareth costly apparell? No Madam, quoth Peratio, neither doe I thinke but verie beggers haue their pride, and therefore appoint the seat of this folly in the heart, not in the habit: for as the coule makes not the monck, nor the gray weede the frier, so sumptuous attire procureth not alwaies presumption, neither doeth pride

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euer harbour in silkes: pride loketh as lowe as the cottage, and pouertie hath his conceit tainted with selfe loue. Crates was more proud of his scrip and wallet, than Cressus of all his wealth. Plato had such an insight into the péeuish pride of Diogenes, that he durst boldly say, Calco superbiâ Diogenis. The begger Irus that hanted the pallace of Penelope, would take his ease in his Inne as well as the péeres of Ithaca. Thoughts are not measured by exteriour effects, but by inwarde affectes. Roabes made not Agathocles leaue to drinke in earthen vessels, but ragges shewded a proude mind in Eubulus, that presumd to call him the sonne of a potter: tis as bad a consequent to call a king proud for his treasure, as a begger humble for his want, and therefore in my opinion, from the king to the begger, no estate is frée from this follie. But pride as the predominant qualitie in euerie sere, degrée and age challengeth in euerie ones mind some special and particular prerogatiue. To confirme which, Gentlemen if you will giue me leaue, I will rehearse you a pleasaunt historie. The Countie and the rest of the Gentlemen and Ladies, desirous to heare Peratios tale, setled themselues to silence, and he beganne in this manner.

The Tale of Peratio.

WHile the citie of Buda remayned frée from the inuasion of the Turke was one of the chiefe promontories of Christendom, there reigned as king Iohannes Vadislaus, a man so possessed with happines in the prime of his youth, as it seemd the

the ſtarres in his nativitie had conſpired to make him fortunate. By parentage royally and rightly diſcended from the ancient kings of Hungaria by birth ſole king and monarch of all the Tranſalpine regions, nature had ſo curiouſly performed his charge in the lineaments of his bodie, & the planets by happie aſpects ſo carefully inriched his mind with ſundrie gifts: as it was in queſtion which of all theſe might chalenge by right the ſupremacie. But as the pureſt chriſtall hath his ſtrakes, the clærcſt ſkie his cloudes, the fineſt die his ſtaine: ſo Vadiſlaus amidſt all theſe golden legacies bequeathed to him by nature, Fortune and the gods, had yet a blemiſh darkened all his other glories with diſgrace. For his minde was ſo puffed vp with a diſdainefull kinde of pride, that he purchaſed not onely a ſpeciall enuie of his nobilitie, but a generall hate of his commons: ſeated thus by his owne conceipt in a ſecure content, although in verie dæde dayly ſtanding vpon thornes: for that the liues of kings pinched with enuie are as brittle as glaſſe, he thought Fortune had beene tied to his thoughtes in a ſtring, and that the forehead of time had bene furrowed with no wrinckles, that kings might commande the heauens, and that ſuch monarchs as he might attempt with Xerxes to tie the Ocean in fetters: but experience taught him that the counterfet of Fortune, was like the picture of Ianus, double faced, in the one preſenting flatterie, in the other ſpight: that time had two wings, the one plumd with the feather of a doue to foreſhew peace, the other with the pennes of an eagle to denounce warres, that kings might determine but God diſpoſe: that a ſcepter was no warrant to priuiledge them from miſſortune, that euerie bliſſe hath his bane, that euerie pleaſure hath his paine, and euerie dram of delight counterpoiſed with

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a whole tunne of miſerie. But in the bloſſoms of his youth, when ſelfe loue tickled him forwarde to ouerweene of his owne eſtate: conſideration, the enemie to vntimely attempts, had not trode on his héele, but taking the raines of libertie in his handes, he ranne with Phaeton headlong into his owne miſfortune. For on a day, as oft he deſired to delight his ſenſes with the fragrant verdure of the meades, intending to be ſolitarie, for he hated diſport, in that he ſcorned any of his nobility ſhoulde beare him companie, he paſſed ſecretly out at a poſterne gate, onely accompanied with one of his nobles, whom amongſt all the reſt he admitted into priuat familiaritie: an Earle he was, and called Selydes, and went to a groue hard adioyning to the pallace, where in an arbour that nature, without the helpe of art, had moſt curiouſly wrought, he paſſed away parte of the day in melancholy meditation: at laſt tickled with a déepe conceit of his owne happineſſe, commanding his noble man a part, he beganne thus to ſoth him ſelfe in his owne follies. Haſt thou not heard Vadiſlaus, nay doeſt thou not know, that kings are gods, and why gods, becauſe they are kings, that a crowne contayneth a worlde of pleaſures, and Fortune euer ſtoupeth at the ſight of a ſcepter, that the maieſtie of a prince is like the lightning from the Eaſt, and the threates of a king like the noyſe of thunder? What ſayeſt thou Vadiſlaus, are kings goddes? Why doeſt thou ſo muche abaſe thy ſelfe, kings are more than goddes, for Iupiter for all his Deitie was glad to reigne a pettie king in Créte, Saturne ſued for the Diademe of Italie, both goddes, if Poets ſay true, and yet both inferiour vnto thée in crowne and kingdome. The Tranſalpine Regions that border vppon the Rheine are thine, thou art ſole king in all thoſe dominions.

The ſtarres feares to croſſe thée with any contray aſpect, the temple of peace opens hir gates at thy preſence, riche thou art, featured thou art, feared thou art, happy thou art, conclude all that may bée ſayd either of honour, fauour, or fortune, a king thou art Vadiſlaus: yea, ſo ſurely ſeated in thy Monarchye, as did the heauens oppoſe themſelues agaynſt thy proſperitie and happineſſe, their ſpight were in vaine to determine thy ruine and ouerthrow. Therefore Vadiſlaus bring not contempt to ſuch a royall dignitie by too muche familiaritie, diſdayne in a king is the figure of maieſtie, tis glorious for princes to let their ſubiects feare at the thoght of their Soueraigne: ſo then Vadiſlaus, let this cenſure bée ratified, and from henſe forth vſe thy nobilitie as neceſſarie members to perfourme thy commande, but for companions, none Vadiſlaus, but kinges. At this he ſwelled and being droncke with the dregges of his owne folly, deſirous to bée ſoothed in this imagination, he called vnto him the Countie Selydes, vnto whome hee vttered theſe wordes.

Thou ſéeſt Selydes I am a king, to be feared of men, becauſe honoured of the goddes, tell me freely without flatterie, what doeſt thou thinke either of me or my gouernement. The Countie who all his life time had bene a courtier, and yet neuer learned nor loued with Ariſtippus to be Dionyſius ſpaniell, craued pardon of the king, which granted, he framed his talke in this manner.

I can not deny (mighty ſoueraigne) but kings are gods, in that they ought to reſemble their Deities in gouernement and vertue, but yet as the faireſt Cedar hath his water boughes, the richeſt Marguerite hir fault, and the ſwéeteſt roſe his prickle: ſo in a crowne

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is hidden farre more care than content, for one moment of perfect eafe a whole moneth of difquiet thoughtes, that were the perils apparant that are hid in a Diademe, hardly would ambition boaft in fuch triumphes, the gold of Tholoffe glifkered and yet it was fatall, Seianus horfe was faire to the eye yet vnluckie, a fcepter befet with ftones is beautiful, but dangerous: kings (my liege) are men and therefore fubiect to miffe, mortall and therefore vondflaues vnto Fortune, and yet the title of a crowne oft puffeth vp their mindes fo with pride, as forgetting themfelues, they fuddenly proove infortunate, Polycrates fo fwelled in the conceit of his happineffe, as hee thought the heauens coulde not countermand his profperitie, yet experience taught him that Time and Fortune ftode on a gloabe and therefore mutable, that the calmeft fea hath his ftormes, and the higheft fteps to felicitie, the deepeft fall to miffortune: for the beginning of his youth was not fo profperous, as the ende of his age was tragicall. Nero was proud, and therfore tyrannous, for the one is a confequent to the other, and fo by pride loft both life and Lordfhip, kings (my liege) haue found this by experiẽce, & haue feared to make profe of it by triall: fo that Philip had a boy to put him in minde of his mortalitie. Alexander woulde bee called the fonne of Iupiter, but Califtenes made him denie fuch arrogancie in Babylon. Creſus was proude of his pelfe, but Solon pulde downe his plumes by preferring Byton before him in happineffe, kings heads are not impalled with fame, for that they are kings, but becauſe they are vertuous. Auguſtus Cæſar was not famous for his Empire but for his clemencie. Seuerus was not chronicled for his treaſure but for his iuſtice. Antonius Pius

had not his picture plaſt in the Capitoll, becauſe of his ſcepter, but for he was merciſull: So my Lorde to your queſtion, I thinke your maieſtie a king in deede with large dominions, and honoured with royall titles of dignitie, and it fitteth not a ſubiect to miſlike of his princes gouernement: onely this I conclude, and this hartely I wiſh, that your highneſſe may liue fauoured of the goddes, and loued and honoured of men. He that bruſeth the Oliue tree with hard iron, fetcheth out no oyle but water, and he that pricketh a proude heart with perſwaſions, draweth out onely hate and enuie. For Vadiſlaus ſo grudged at the friendly aduertiſementes of the Countie Selides, that choaking his choler with ſilence, he made no replie, but went home to the palace: where, for the receit of a ſilhe, thinking to repay a ſcorpion, he whetted his thoughtes onely on reuenge. And Fortune, who ſtill thought to fauour him in his follies, ſmothed him with ſucceſſe in his enuie, that rayſing him to the higheſt ſphere of ſelfe conceit, ſhe might throw him downe to the loweſt center of diſpaire: for manie dayes had not paſt before, by ſome ſiniſter meanes, he had wrought ſo with the reſt of his nobilitie, that the Countie was founde faultie by falſe witneſſe in a penall ſtatute, that his goodes were confiſcated vnto the kings vſe, his bodie exiled into Germanie, and his onelye daughter for one and but one hee had as a diſtreſſed virgine, was reſte at once both of parentes and patrimonie. The Countie arming his thoughtes with pacience, againſt the deſpight of Fortune, counting it good counſayle to make a vertue of neceſſitie, left his daughter in ſteade of a dowrie to inriche hir marriage, fatherlye

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doctrine to increaſe her manners : for giuing hir coyne that enuie had reft, leauing hir aduiſe and counſayle that experience had taught, counting it more happineſſe to haue his daughter prooue wiſe than wealthie, as preferring the giftes of the mind farre before the goodes of Fortune, parting thus from his onelye childe, from his frendes and from his Countrye hee coulde not but ſorrowe, and yet in ſuch meaſure, as diſpaire coulde take no aduauntage of his paſſions. The Ladye, as made of a more tender complexion, let looſe the fountaynes of hir teares, and hauing taken hir farewell of hir father lamented his caſe, as farre as the rech of hir eye could keepe the Barke within ken, after the ſhippe was out of ſight, and ſhée left alone and comfortleſſe on the ſhoare, ſhée beganne after this manner to complayne with hir ſelfe.

Diſtreſſed and ſorrowfull Mæſia, for ſo was hir name, where ſhalt thou beginne to recount thy greefes, or make an ende of thy diſpayring ſorrowes: the prime of youth, which to others is a ſummer of good happe, being to thee a froſtie winter of miſfortune. Nowe doeth experience teache thée for trueth, which earſt thou accounteds't for a fable, that the priuiledge of honour is ſealed with the ſignet of time, that the higheſt degrées haue not the ſureſt ſeates, that nobilitie is no warrant againſt miſhappe, that the higheſt cedars are blaſted with lightning, when the lower ſhrub waues not with the wind, ſmall brookes bubble forth ſilent ſtreames, when greater ſeas are troubled with tempeſtes : enuie yea enuie the verie caterpiller of content, ſpareth the touche of a cottage, when he indeuours the ruine of a pal-

lace, he ſcorneth a begger when he ſtricketh a king, and vouchſafeth not to checke pouertie, when hee giueth honour the mate. Then Mæſia, what reaſon haſt thou to bewayle thy preſent fall, and not rather to ioy at thy future hap, accuſe not fates or Fortune as thy foes, when their deſpight redounded not to thy loſſe, but thy libertie, whilome thou wert honourable, and therefore feareſull, nowe thou art poore, and therefore ſecure, alate reſtleſſe, feare of miſchappe diſquieted thy ſlœpes in a pallace, nowe a quiet content ſhall afoorde thée ſwéete ſlumbers in a cottage, there didſt thou ſigh in ſilkes, heere mayeſt thou ſing in ruſſet, there nobilitie was counterpoyſed with care, here pouertie is inriched with quiet. Then Mæſia, chaunge thy affections with thy fortunes, line as though thou wert borne poore, and hope as one aſſured to dye riche: for there is no greater honour than quiet, nor no greater treaſure than content. But alas my father, mine aged father: Scarſe had ſhee vttered theſe woordes, but griefe preſented ſuche a heape of diſtreſſed thoughts, that either the heart muſt burſt by ſmoothering ſuch ſcalding ſorrowes, or elſe the tongue and eyes reſolue vnto playntes and teares. Ah deſpightfull and iniurious Fortune, quoth ſhée, well did Zeuxes paynt thée blinde, and yet without a vale, as hauing thine eyes not couered with a lawne, but darkened with deſpight, the froſt nippeth the budde when he ſpareth the roote, the goddes ſlue the brattes of Iocaſta but ſpared Oedipus, the wrinckles of age ſhoulde be warrauntes of weale, thé ſiluer hairs ſhoulde bee pledges of peace. But kynde or furie as thou art, thou haſt threatned my father with a contrarye

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malice, in the cradle giuing him swéete syrops, at the graue presenting him with bitter potions, in the prime of his youth bring him a slæpe with honour, in the ende of his dayes disquieting his thoughtes with pouertie. Silence Mæsia, least Fortune hearing thy complaynts, ioy in hir owne spight, and triumphe in thy sorrowes, the swéetest salue of misshappe is pacience, and no greater reuenge can be offered Fortune, than to rest content in miserie, teares are no cures for distresse, neither can thy present plaintes pleasure thy absent father: then Mæsia comfort thy selfe and what time thou shouldest bestowe on discoursing thy misfortunes, spende in orisons to the goddes, to redresse thy fathers cares and reuenge his iniuries, and vppon this resolution she rested, and for that she would kæpe a decorum, as well in hir attire as in hir actions, she put off hir riche roabes and put on homely ragges, transforming hir thoughtes with hir apparell, trauelled from the court into the countrie, where sæking for seruice, she had not passed long, before she met with a welthy farmers sonne, who handsomely deckt vp in his holy day hose, was going very manerly to be foreman in a Morice dãce, and as nére as I can gesse thus he was apparelled: he was a tall slender youth cleane made with a good indifferent face, hauing on his head a strawne hat stéeple wise, bounde about with a band of blue buckram, he had on his fathers best tawnye worsted iacket: for that this daies exploit stood vpon his credit, he was in a paire of hose of red kersie, close truss with a point afore, his mother had lent him a newe muffler for a napkin, & that was tied to his girdle for losing, he had a paire of haruest gloues on his hands as shewing good hul bãdry, & a pen & inckhorn

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at his backe : for the young man was a little bookish, his pompes were a little too heauie, being trimmed start-vps made of a paire of boote legges, tied before with two white leather thongs, thus handsomely arrayed, for this was his sonday sute, he met the Ladie Mæsia, and séeing hir so faire and well formed, farre passing their countrie maides in proportion, and nothing differing in apparell, he stoode halfe amazed as a man that had séene a creature beyond his countrie conceit, and in déede she was passing faire, for this I remember was hir description:

Hir stature and hir shape was passing tall,
Diana like, when longst the lawnes she goes,
A stately pace like Iuno when she braued,
The queene of heauen fore Paris in the vale,
A front beset with loue and maiestie,
A face like louely Venus when she blusht
A seely shepherd shoulde be beauties iudge,
A lip sweete rubie red, grac'd with delight,
Hir eies two sparkling starres in winter night,
When chilling frost doth cleere the azurd skie,
Hir haires in tresses twind with threds of silke,
Hoong wauing downe like Phœbus in his prime:
Hir breasts as white as those two snowie swannes
That drawes to Paphos Cupids smiling dame:
A foote like Thetis when she tript the sands,
To steale Neptunus fauour with his steps:
In fine, a peece despight of beauty framd,
To see what natures cunning could affoord.

Thus I haue heard the Ladie described, and this hir rare forme droue this countrie youth into this maruelous admiration, at last Mæsia séeing the poore fellowe in a maze: after salutations done as countrie like as she could, and yet too courtly for

his

his calling, she enquired of him if hee knew anie good and honest house, where she might be entertained into seruice. The young man who all this while had starde her in the face, told her that she came in pudding time, for his mother wanted a maide, and if shee could take anie paines, no doubt she should find a house fit for her purpose. And (quoth hee) I haue such good hope that you will proue well, that although this daie I shoulde haue bene foreman in a may-game, yet I will rather marre the plaie then your market, and so will tourne backe to leade you the waie to our house. Mæsia gaue him thankes, and together they went to his Fathers, where after the young springall had talked a while with his mother, for he was his fathers eldest sonne, the good wife had such liking of the maide, that shee gaue her an earnest penny to serue her for a yeere, and so hired her before the Constable. Mæsia beeing thus honestly plast, by her good behauiour grewe into such fauour with all the house, that the olde fooles began to thinke her a fit match for their eldest sonne, and in this hope vsed her meruailous well. But leauing her to her Countrie content, at last to Vadislaus, who hauing nowe glutted enuie with reuenge in bannishing the good Earle, pearked so highe with Danidas Parrat, that at the last hee fell to the grounde: For pride had taught him this principle, that princes wils ware lawes, and that the thoughts of kings could not erre, disdaine and contempt, two monsters of nature, had so sotted his mind with selfe loue, that as his actions grew to be insolent, so his gouernment began to be tyrannous, commanding as fancie wild him to affect, not as iustice wisht him to afford: he sought not with Augustus to be called Clemens, but with Tarquin to glorie in the title of Superbus: alluding the dislike which Virgil wrote in the praise of Cæsar to him-

selfe, *Diuisum imperium cum Ioue Cæsar habet.* He would not with Phillip bee called martiall, but with Alexander be honored as the sonne of Ammon: hee sought not to sit in his throne with a braunch of palme, to gouerne with peace, but vsed a sworde as a scepter to rule with constraint. Long hee dyd not continue in this life, but that hee grewe in mortall hate with his subiectes, the poore commons grudged and groned vnder the burden of his cruelties, the Nobilitie beganne to consider with themselues, that more did the state of Rome ruinate in one yeere vnder the gouernment of the Emperour Calygula, then it prospered in manie vnder the vertuous regiment of Traian, that more blossomes die the first nippe in a morning, than the heate of the Sunne can reuiue in a whole daie, and more harme doeth the pride of a king in a moment, than good pollicie can restore in a moneth: whereupon they determined to forewarne him of his follies, and to perswade him from that course of life, which would in time bring the commonwealth to mischiefe, and himselfe to misfortune: finding fit time and opportunitie with a generall consent they beganne to dissuade him from his presumption, but *Vadislaus* who brookt not to be countermanded by anie of his nobles, returnde them this scornfull answere.

My Lordes, as the Sunne is set in the heauens, so kings are seated vppon earth: the one too glorious an obiect for eurie eie to gaze at, the other too full of maiestie for anie man to controule. The woulfe had his skin pulled ouer his ears for prying into the lions den: the actions of Princes are like the pearles of Arabia, the one too costly for euerie marchant to prise, the other too honourable for euerie base person to censure of. Dare the proudest birde beare, wing against the

Eagle,

Eagle? Is not the print of a lyons clawe a seale of his safetie, and the verie title, nay the verie thought of a king, a warrant of his blisse. Take heede my Lordes, let the preiudice of others bee a president for you to beware: me thinke the Countie Selydes mishap might warne you from presling too much on my fauour. Seneca by grudging at Neros blisse procured his owne bane, Calistenes checking the thoughts of Alexander wrought his owne ouerthrowe. Kings must not be controuled for that they are Kings, and therefore from henceforth doome not of my doinges least. And with that he flung from them in a rage, as one aiming at reuenge, if heereafter they mislikt of his gouernment. The nobles whome disdaine had armed to despaire, began to murmure at the kings wicked resolution, and either to free the commonwealth from miserie, or by attempting such an enterprise to procure their owne mishap: amongest them all Rodento, a noble man more bolde then the rest, burst forth into these passions.

My Lordes and worthie Peeres of Buda, feared for your valour, and famous for your victories, let not the priuate will of one man bee the ruine of such a mightie kingdome, kings are Gods, then let them gouerne like Gods, or giue vs leaue to account them worse then men, let the examples of other nations tie vs to the consideration of our present estate. The Athenians preferred the weale of their Countrie before the pride of Alcibiades, Cæsar was slaine in the Senate for his pride, Hannibal twice exiled Carthage for his presumption, Dyonisius banisht out of Scycily for his insolencie: Crownes (my Lordes) are no plackardes of wickednesse, Securitie waiteth not anie longer vpon a Scepter than it is swayde with equitie, a Diademe is no longer glorious then it is

decked with vertue, so ỹ occasion presents vs a double proffer, either by soothing ỹ king in his pride to suffer the common wealth to perish, or by rooting out such a prince, to saue both our selues and the kingdome from preiudice: now my Lords the ballance is poised, chuse which part you please. Rodento hauing set their harts on fire with these woordes, they all consented to recall Countie Selides from banishment, and if at the second perswasion the king woulde not take a better course, to make him sole monarch of Buda: they wer not slack in their purposed intent, but dispatcht letters secretlie by a spædie Post into Germanie, which the Countie Selides receiuing, suspected at the first a further mischieke, but at last throughly satisfied by the messenger of their faithful intent, he cut ouer with as much spæd as might be, & secretly in the night came to the house of Rodento, where being honourablie intertained, the next daie all the nobles assembled, and there in counsaile tolde the Countie Selides how in requitall of his exile they meant either to set him in his former estate, or else to inrich him with the benefit of a crowne. The County was vnwilling to grant to their requests, yet at last seing deniall could not preuaile, he consented, and all ioyntly went together to the Court: where they founde the king walking according to his wonted manner in his accustomed melancholie: who scarce saluting his Lordes with a good looke, yet straight had espied the Countie Selides: at whose sight with a face inflamed with cholar, and eies sparkling hate, hee demanded why the Countie Selides was reuoked from exile, how he durst presume so nigh to approch his presence, or which of his Lords was so hardie as to admit him into their company? Rodento speaking for the rest made answere, that as the Countie Selides was banished without cause, so he might lawfully returne with

out

out pardon, that offences measured with enuie, were to be saued without intreatie, & therfore did no more then they all present were readie to iustifie: and further, whereas his maiestie was so setted in selfe conceit that he held his will as a lawe, and made a metamorphosis of a monarchie into a flat gouernment of tyrannie: they were come to perswade his highnesse from such folly, wherein if he resolued to persist, they were determined not onely to depriue him of his crown and kingdome, but before his face to celebrate the coronation of Selides. Vadislaus hearing this peremptorie resolution of his Lordes, was nothing dismaide, but with a countenance ouershadowed with disdaine, tolde them hee feared not their braues: for quoth he, the trecherous attempt of a subiect cannot dismate the princely courage of a king. When the slaues of Scythia rebelled against their Lordes, they were not subdued with weapons, but with whips. Cirus punished traitors, not with the axe to infer death, but with a fooles coate to procure perpetuall shame: therfore my lords I charge you vpon your allegeance take holde of that outlawe Selides, put him in prison till he heare farther of my pleasure, and for your owne partes submit your selues and craue pardon. The noble men plaide like the deafe Addar that heareth not the sorcerers charme, neither could they bee dissuaded from their intent by the threates of a king, but following their purpose, presently deposed him of all regal dignitie and celebrated the coronation of Selides: who seated in the regall throne, had no sooner the scepter in his hand, but enuie beganne to grow in his heart, and reuenge haled him on to seale vp his comicall successe with tragicall sorrow, for he commanded Vadislaus to be pulled out of his roabes and put into rags, in stead of a crowne to giue him a scrip, for a scepter a palmers

staffe, making generall proclamation that none of what degree so euer, shoulde allowe him anie maintenance, but that his inheritance shoulde bee the wide fields, and his reuenues nought else but charitie. Vadislaus thus at one time deposed and metamorphosed from a king to a begger, was now disdayned of those whome before he did scorne, and laught at by such as before hee did enuie, the nobilitie shakt him off as a refuse, the commons vsed him as a bad companion, both iointly forgat he had ben their king, and smothly smiled at his misfortune. Vadislaus as a man in a trance, being past a little from his pallace, seeing the place which whilome was the subiect of pleasure, now the obiect of discontent, that wher he did command as a king, he was controlled as an abiect, he fel into these distressed passions.

Is youth the wealth of nature, to be wracked with euerie flawe? Is honour the priuiledge of nobilitie, subiect to euerie fall: Hath maiestie that makes vs fellow partners with the Gods in dignitie, no warrant to graunt a sympathy of their deities, that as we are equall in highnes, so we may be immortall in happines? Why doest thou enter Vadislaus into such friuolous questions, when thy present misfortune telles thee kings are but men, and therfore the verie subiects of Fortune? Ah vnhappie man hadst thou confessed as much as proofe sets thee downe for a principle, the ouerflowing gale of selfe loue had neuer brought thy barke perforce to so bad an harbour. Hadst thou gouerned like a God in equitie, thou hadst stil ruled like a God in honour: but pride perswading thee a crowne had made thee more then a man, hath nowe induced time to assure thee, that thou art the worst of all men. Kings seats are like the rooms that Egistus made for straungers, wherein beeing placed, the care was de-

ligh-

lighted with melodie, the eie with sundrie shewes of content, the smelling with swéet sauors: but to counteruaile these pleasures, ouer their heads hung naked swoordes in slender fillets of silke, which procured more feare than the rest did delight: maiestie is lyke the triple string of a Lute, which let too lowe maketh badde musicke, and stretched too high, either craketh or setteth all out of tune. Fortunes fauours resemble the prickes of a Porcupine, that carelesslie gazed at, pleaseth the eie and the touch, but narrowly handled, both hurteth the sight and the sense. Ah Vadislaus, had consideration foretaught thee these untimelie principles, thou hadst neither found the seats of kings vnsure, maiestie out of time, nor fortune but as shée is to all men, inconstant. But pride, what sayest thou of pride Vadislaus? Was it not lawfull for thée to be prouder then all men, that wert higher in dignitie then all men? Might not a crown yéld thée a self-conceit in thy actions? What diddest thou beeing king that beseemed not a king? Disdaine I tell thee is the glorie of a Scepter, and in that still bee resolute, beest thou neuer so poore in estate, bee still a Prince in thought, parentage is without the compasse of Fortune, the Gods may dispose of wealth, but not of birth, imagine thy palmers bonnet a princes diadem, thinke thy staffe a scepter, thy graie weeds costly attire, imaginations are as swéete as actions: and seeing thou canst not bée a king ouer nobilitie, bée yet a king ouer beggers: holde pouertie as a slaue, by thinking thy want store, and still disdayne all that art despised of all: Dionisius was for the same braue minde exiled out of his kingdome, but hee kept a schoole in Corinth, and there although hee were not a prince ouer men, yet bée was a king ouer boies, and the force of his imagination soothed him in a princely content.

Tush

Tush Vadislaus, neuer shrinke at this shot, now thou art more thē a king, for thou art a monarch both ouer fates and fortune, and yet this priuiledge is left thée that none in Buda can challenge, thou maiest boaste thou hast bene a king, and whosoeuer giues thée for almes, neuer yéeld him thankes, for hee bestowes but what once was thine: Vadislaus arming himselfe thus with a desperate kinde of patience, passed poorely disguised and despised through his owne Countrie. And Selides safely seated in the kingdome, after hee had set the affaires of the weale publike in good order, tooke all his care to know where his daughter was bestowed, but hearing no newes where shee was harboured, made generall proclamation through all his dominions, that who so could tell newes what was becomes of the ladie Mæsia the kings daughter, should be greatly aduanced in calling, and haue a thousand crownes for his paines. The Farmers sonne happened to bée with his mothers butter at the market when this proclamation was made, and comming home, tolde it in secret for great newes, how that the king was deposed from his crowne, & Selides created in his place, and that whosoeuer could tel where Mæsia was should be well rewarded for his labour. The olde Farmer nodding his head at these newes, made answere: you may see sonne, quoth he, what it is to bee a great man, I tell you the gaie coates of kings couers much care, as they haue many pleasures, so they haue mickle perils, the plowman hath more ease then a King: for the one troubles but his bodie with exercise, the other disquiets his minde with waighty affaires, I warrant thee wise we haue as much health with féeding on the browne loafe, as a Prince hath with all his delicates, and I steale more swéete naps in the chimney corner in a wœke, then (God saue his maiestie) the King doth

quiet

quiet slæpes in his beds of doune in a whole moneth. Oft haue I heard my Father saie (and I tell thée our predecessours were no fooles) that a husbandman plowed out of the ground three things, wealth, health and quiet, which (quoth hee) is more worth then a kinges ransome: but tis no matter, let not vs meddle with kings affaires, but if the councell haue thought it good to put downe *V*adislaus, he may thank his own pride, which sonne learne of me, is the root of all mischiefes, and if they haue crowned Selides, wee sée a goodly example, he that humbleth himselfe shall be exalted, but I would I could tel where the kings daughter were, for he that reaps fauour and wealth gets a double benefite. Mæsia who heard these newes of her Fathers preferment, smiled in her owne conceit, that fortune had made so sharpe and short a reuenge, and that now after many miseries past ouer with patience, shee might not onely saie *Dabit Deus his quoque finem*, but *Hec olim meminisse iuuabit*. The remembrance of honor tainted her cheekes with a purple die at the sight of his present drudgerie, the hope of dignity tickled his mind with a sodaine ioy, to thinke what a metamorphosis should happen at her pleasure, but when she called to minde the Countrie sayings of her olde maister, and sawe by proofe how fickle fortune was in her fauors, and had considered what mishap laie in maiestie, and what a secure life it was to liue poore, she found dignitie ouershadowed with danger, wheras pouertie slept quietly at his plough beame. Honour wilde her to bewraie what she was, quiet persuaded her that content was a kingdome. Perplered thus w sundrie thoughts after her house was handsomely and huswifely dreast vp, she toke her spinning wheéle to the doore, and there setting her selfe solitarily in the shade, she had not drawen forth three or foure threedes, but Vadislaus in his

beggers roabes came to the dooze, and seeing so neate a Countrie wench at her wheele, without anie salutations, after his cynicall manner began to gaze on her beautie. The maide taking him for no other but some staut begger, as Countrie maides vse to solace themselues, began to carroll out a song to this effect.

Sweet are the thoughts that sauour of conrent,
the quiet mind is richer then a crowne,
Svveet are the nights in careleſſe ſlumber ſpent,
the poore eſtate ſcornes fortunes angrie frovvne
Such ſvveet cõtent, ſuch mindes, ſuch ſleep, ſuch blis
Beggers inioy, when Princes oft do mis.

The homely houſe that harbors quiet reſt,
the cottage that affoords no pride nor care,
The meane that grees with Countrie muſick beſt,
the ſweet conſort of mirth and muſicks fare,
Obſcured life ſets downe a type of blis,
a minde content both crowne and kingdome is.

The song of Mæsia somewhat touched the minde of Vadislaus, that meruailing what prette musition this should be that had so swéte a voice and so pithie a dittie, he began to interrupt her melodie in this sorte. Faire maide, for so I may tearme you best, in that I giue thée but thy due to saie thou art beautifull, and allow thée a fauour in thinking thou art honest, tel me, is this Country cottage thy fathers house? and if it be, thy birth is so base & thy bringing vp so bad, how hap thou hast found disquiet in dignity, and care containd in a crowne? Hast thou séene the court, and so speakest by experience, or learnd this dittie as a song of course, and so hittest the crow by hap. Mæsia hearing the begger so inquisitiue, especially placing his wordes in

such

ſuch a commanding phraſe, thinking him to bee no other then his ragges did repoꝛte, ſhooke him vp thus ſharply. Tis foꝛ beggers (quoth ſhee) whome foꝛtune hath tied to the curteſie of others, to craue almes with treaties, not to demand queſtions with inquiſition, foꝛ as they haue no other plackard than pouertie, ſo their charter is ſubmiſſion and lowlines, what ſo euer my tongue contained, ſtep not thou farther than thy ſcrip, thou art meane inough, therefoꝛe quiet inough, no almes would do thee moꝛe good than a queſtion, and therefoꝛe ſtaie while my thꝛedde is dꝛawen, and thou ſhalt haue my deuotion. Vadiſlaus whoſe pꝛide was not changed with his apparell, told her ẏ the vertue of the trée was not diſcerned by the ontward barke, but by the inward ſap, that the Lapidarie might be deceiued in colours, that roabes made not kings, noꝛ rags beggers, that Appollo beeing a God, metamoꝛphoſed himſelfe, not into a pꝛince, but to a ſhepheard, that Mercurie foꝛ his pleaſure tooke the foꝛme of a cowe hearde, to try the tabling of Bacchus, outward ſhewes are not inward effects, and therfoꝛe ſhe might miſtake him, and though his cloathng diſcouered pouertie, his calling might be honourable. Mæſia hearing ſo well oꝛdered an anſwer to come from ſuch a diſoꝛdered perſon, began to note moꝛe narrowly the lineaments of his face, & at laſt perceiued it was the quondam king Vadiſlaus, but ſtill diſſembling what both ſhe thought and knew, made him this anſwere: Friend, if I haue ſhot awꝛie blame the marke that I aimed at, and not my cenſure by outward ſhow, foꝛ we Countrie maids are ſo homely bꝛought vp, that wée count none kings but what weare crowones, and all beggers that carrie ſcrippes and craue almes, if your degree be aboue your ſhewe, it was your owne faulte, and not my folly that made mée ſo fooliſhe, my

ſong I hope what ſo ere ye be, hath giuē none offence: if thou haſt bene rich, it tells thée what diſquiet is in dignitie, and that the cottage affoꝛds moꝛe quiet then a kingdome: if thou wert neuer but as thou art, then maiſt thou ſée what content is in pouertie, and learne that the obſcure life conteineth ỹ greateſt bliſſe: kings are men, and therefoꝛe ſubiect to miſhap, Foꝛtune is blinde, and muſt either miſſe of her aime, oꝛ ſhoote at a great marke, her boltes flie not ſo lowe as beggerie, when honour is pearced with euerie blow, and therefoꝛe Marcus Curcius that had thꝛice bene dictatoꝛ, and as many times triumphed hidde himſelfe in a pooꝛe farme to be frée from the iniurie of foꝛtune. Vadiſlaus dꝛiuen into a paſſion with this parle, aſked her why ſhe told him of the ſtratagems of kings, ſéeing her ſelfe was a begger: foꝛ that, quoth Mæſia, thou didſt ſcoꝛne euen now to be counted a begger: nay quoth Vadiſlaus foꝛ that thou knoweſt, oꝛ at the leaſt doeſt ſuſpect I am a king: Mæſia tolde him ſhe had ſmall reaſon to make ſuch a ſurmiſe, but deſired that ſhe might know if hée were Vadiſlaus, that of late was depoſed: I am quoth he, the ſame, I tel thée maide, euerie waie the ſame, foꝛ miſhap hath no whit altered my minde. Then (quoth Mæſia) hath foꝛtune done ill, to ioyne in thée both pouertie and pꝛide, foꝛ either hath Repoꝛt a bliſter on her tongue, oꝛ thy fall did inſue of diſdainfull inſolencie: thy fault hath bene alwaies the fall of pꝛinces, the ruine of ſtates, and the vtter ſubuerſion of kingdomes. Dyocleſian the Romane was ſo pꝛoude, that he called himſelfe bꝛother to the Sunne, and was the firſt that euer made edict to haue the feete of Emperours kiſt, in ſigne of ſeruill ſubmiſſion, his end was madneſſe: the pꝛide of Pompey was his ouerthꝛow: the deſire of kingly title cauſed Cæſar to die in the ſenate houſe:

but

but thy harueſt is out of the graſſe, and my counceil commeth now, as a ſhower of raine doeth when the corne is ripe: yet ſeeing you are fallen into pouertie, let mee aduiſe thee howe to beare it with patience. Want is not a depriuation of vertue, but a releaſe of care and trouble. Epamynondas was not called halfe a God, nor Lycurgus a ſauiour, becauſe they abounded in wealth and were ſlaues to their paſſions, but becauſe they were Princes, and yet content with pouertie: then let their liues be a marke whereby to direct your actions, that as you are fallen from dignitie by default, ſo you may liue in pouertie with patience, & ſo die a more honorable begger then thou diddeſt liue a king, and if thou meruaile who it is that giues thee ſuch friendly councell, know I am daughter to Selydes, who driuen by thy iniuſtice to this diſtreſſe, although my father now a king, yet I find ſuch content in pouertie, as I little haſt to exchange this life with dignitie.

Vadiſlaus carefully marking the weight of euery word, eſpecially proceeding from her whom he had iniured, bluſhed at the ſight of her patience, and yet as a man whom deſpaire had hardned on to miſhappe, nothing relented at her perſwaſions, but in a melancholy furie flong from the doore without ſaying one worde, or bidding her farewell. Mæſia noting ſtill the peruerſe ſtomacke in the man, ſayde to her ſelfe, What folly is there greater than Pride, which neyther age nor pouertie can extinguiſh? What afterwarde became of Vadiſlaus, the Annales of Buda makes not mention, but only of this, that he died poore and yet proude. For Mæſia pitying her fathers ſorrowes that he made for her abſence, more for his content than for anie delight in dignitie, ſhortly after ſhee forſooke the Countrie and went to the court.

Peratio hauing ended his tale, the whole companie commended his discourse, and especially the old countesse, who not onely gaue him praise as a laurell for his labours, but thanks, as due to him by deserts, saying, that in deede pride was one of those sinnes which nature had framd without change, that Fortune was a mistresse ouer other passions, and Time had a medicine for other maladies, onely pride and the gout hath his similitude in effects, that they were incurable. Wel madam, quoth Bernardino, Peratio hath done well, but praie God he resemble not the rich Bishop of Cullen, that preaching against couetousnes, had a poore mans lease to pawne in his handes, which hee vsed as an instrument to act against vsurie: he is a scoller madam, and therefore within the compasse of his owne conclusions, for we see these Vniuersitie men ouercome themselues deeply in this folly, insomuch that not content to be proude at home, they seeke by trauell to hunt after vanity. As I cannot, quoth Peratio, excuse my self, so I will not accuse all generally, because the premises are too peremptorie that inferre such censurers, but no doubt, schollers are men, and therefore subiect to this fault. And so be courtiers, quoth Ladie Katherine, for you may smell their pride by their perfumes. Tis well, qd Benedetto, that seignior Farneze hath made an exception of women, otherwise Peratio had neuer made an ende of his discourse. Peratio taking hold of Lady Katherines talke, thought to crosse Benedetto ouer the thumbs, and therefore made this reply. Truth it is, that Tully writ to Atticus, that the conquest of Asia had brought fiue notable follies into the Citie of Rome, to make glorious sepulchres, to weare rings of gold, to vse spice in meats, to alay wine with sugar, and to carrie about sweet perfumes and smels. These messieur Bdnedetto, Tully countes follies, and

ye vse as fauours: he thought them preiudiciall, and ye courtiers count them as necessary, and therfore argue how you list, I will haue you within the compasse of my discourse. I can smile, quoth the Ladie Katherine, to see how messieur Benedetto thinking to wring water out of a stone, hath stumbled on a flint, which striking too hard hath brought fire. Yet (quoth Cosimo) his locke was good, for hee burnt but his owne clothes. Seignior Farneze hearing these drie blowes, broke off their talke at this time by commanding one of his mẽ to couer for supper, which done, sitting down with his guests about him, euerie one plied his teeth more than his tongue, Benedetto excepted, who was so chafed in conceit at the Lady Katherine, that his thoughts onely were imploied after dinner how to be reuenged, which indeed he performed in this sorte.

The second discourse of Folly.

After Farneze & the rest had satisfied their stomacks with meat & their minds with mirth, Cosimo seeing Benedetto so passionate, began to whet him on to prattle in this maner. Maister courtier, qd he, to drawe you out of your dũps with a demãd, I pray you answer me to this questiõ: why do ỹ painters in figuring forth the counterfet of loue, draw her blind & couered with a vale, when as we see that in nothing there is a deeper insight than in loue: Benedetto seeing Cosimo put forth this questiõ only to moue talke, told him, that if he had spent but as many idle hours about ỹ substance of affection, as he had done daies about the quiddities of fãcy, he would willingly haue answered his demand: but seeing t'were folly for a souldier to teach Orpheus how to handle his harpe, hee woulde aunswere him as Zeuxes did king Persius, who desiring him to shewe how he coulde drawe the picture of enuie, presently brought him a looking Glasse, wherein Persius perceiue

perceiuing his owne phisnomie blusht: And yet for al this, qd Bernardino, seignior Cosimo doth not change countenance, and yet we all know him to be a louer: and therfore, quoth the Ladie Frances, within the compasse of folly, for this I remember that an Acrion saieth, Cupid was depriued of his sight, not by nature but by iniurie, for the Gods summoning a parliament, whereat appeared all the heauenly deities, Cupid by hap, or rather by fatall presence of the destinies, met with Folly, who surcharged with ouerweening passions, began to dispute of their seuerall powers, the boy not able to brooke comparisons, bent his bow, and was readie to discharge an arrowe against Folly, but shee being readier furnished with wepons, neither regarding his youth, beautie, nor deitie, scratched out his eies, in requital whereof she was by the Gods appointed his guide. Then by this, quoth Peratio, there is no loue without folly. That I denie, answered the Ladie Frances, for true and perfect loue is beyonde the deitie of Cupid, and therefore without the compasse of follie. But such loue as you yong Gentlemen vse, that hath as great a confusion of passions, as Ouids chaos had of simples, is that which I meane, in truth it is lust, but shadowed with the name of loue, which rightly Euripides calleth a furie. I am gladde, quoth Farneze, that we are entered into the discourse of loue, for I will inioyne this nights worke to bee about the discouerie of the verie substance of lust, which drowned in voluptuous pleasures, haleth on the mind to the foule deformed sinne of lecherie, a faulte that we Italians greatly offend in, and yet the custome of sinne hath so taken awaie the feeling of the offence, as wee shame not oft times to glorie in the fault. And for that seignior Cosimo I haue knowen you amongest all the rest to bee most amorous, though I must needes

confesse

confeſſe alwaies honeſtly, yet for that you haue béene acquainted with ſuch paſſions, I commit the charge vnto your hands. Coſimo ſéeing the company ſmile, in that the Countie had tied him to ſuch a taſke, willingly would haue ſurrendered vp his right into an other mans handes, but fearing to diſpleaſe Farneze, and by ſhrincking, to diſcouer where his ſhoe wrong him, arming him ſelfe with patience ſéemed very content: and therefore began to frame his ſpéech in this manner. Although (Gentlemen) Hiparchon coulde play on his flute, yet he was not to diſpute of Muſicke, in that hee knewe more by the practiſe of his finger, than by ſkill of the concordes. Epheſtion coulde handle Bucephalus, but not ride Bucephalus. Menecas the Macedonian was a very good ſimpler, but knewe not how to confect a potion, as one aiming at the vertue of the hearbe, not at the qualitie of the diſeaſe: ſo although I haue, as a nouice, gazed at the temple of Venus, yet I am not able to diſcourſe of the Deitie of Cupid: tis no conſequent, that by féeling a fewe paſſions, I ſhould be able to ſet downe principles, or that a ſparke of fancy ſhould kindle a whole flame of wanton affections, yet that I be not accuſed to be more ſcrupulous than courteous, I will ſay what I haue heard and read of this follie. The Cyriniake Philoſophers, as Ariſtippus, Metrodorus and Epicurus, who founded their ſummum bonum in pleaſure, to ſhadow their brutiſhe principles with ſome ſhewe of reaſon, drew, as Phidias did ouer his deformed pictures, courteines of ſilke, that the outwarde vale might countenance the imperfection of his art, placing the ſubſtance of pleaſure vnder the ſimple ſuperficies of vertue, couering an inuenomed hooke with a faire baite, and like Ianus preſenting a double face, the foremoſt of flatterie, the hindmoſt of ſorrow. Hercules méeting

vice and vertue, found the one gorgeously tricked vp in ornamentes of golde, the other courselye attired in simple clothing, vertue bare faced wering in forehead the counterfait of trueth, vice valed with a maske to couer the deformitie of hir visage, wherein appeared the staynes of pleasure, as the infection of leprosie, which Plutarke noting, being demanded what pleasure was: aunswered, a swæte steppe to repentaunce, alludinge vnto the censure of Phocion, who wrote of the picture of Venus this sentence: Ex vino Venus ex venere ruina & mors. But seing my charge is not to speake generally of pleasure, but of that follie which claiming the name of pleasure, most besotteth the sences of all other obiectes with deceit, I meane lust, which the better to bring in credit, is honoured with the title of loue, I must confesse my selfe herein to be of Aristotles opinion, who being demanded by Alexander the great, what loue was, answered, a metamorphosis of mens bodies and soules into contrarie shapes: for after that the impression of lust, inueigled by the fading obiect of beautie, hath crept in at the eye and possessed the heart, we wholy deliuer our selues, as slaues to sensualitie, forgetting our God for the gaine of a goddesse, whose altars sauours of stincking perfumes, and whose temple is not perfumed with roses, but infected with hemblocke: they which sacrifice vnto Vesta offer vp incense with fire, they which stande at the shrine of Venus offer vp bladders onely filled with winde, the one representing the purenesse of chastitie, the other the lightnesse of affection: you say true, quoth the Ladie Frances, Venus coffers are alwaies emptie, and therefore giuing great sounde, hir garments imbroidered with feathers, as noting inconstancie, for he that marketh the confused estate of you Florentines,

who

who couet to be counted louers, shall finde howe vn-
der that one folly you heape together a masse of mis-
chieuous enormities, for the Gentleman, that drawne
by a voluptuous desire of immoderate affections, seeks
to glut his outward sences with delight, first layeth
his platforme by pride, seeking to allure a chast eye
with the sumptuous shewe of apparell, vnder that
maske to entise the minde vnto vanitie, others by an
eloquent phrase of speeche to tickle the eare with a
pleasing harmonie of well placed words: well placed
in congruitie, though ill construed in sence, some by
Musicke to inueigle the minde with melodie, not spa-
ring to spende parte of the night vnder his mistresses
window, by such paines to procure hir dishonour and
his owne misfortune. These (Gentlemen) be fruites
of your loues, if I tearme it the best way, and yet
follies in that they preiudice both purse and person:
the same baite is flatterie, which giueth the forest bat-
terie to the bulwarke of their chastitie, for when they
see the minde armed with vertue, hard to be wonne,
and like the Diamonde to refuse the force of the file,
then they apply their wittes and wils to worke their
owne woe, penning downe ditties, songs, sonnets,
madrigals, and suche like shadowed ouer with the
pensell of flatterie, where from the fictions of poets
they fetche the type and figure of their fayned affec-
tion: first, decyphering hir beautie to bee more
than superlatiue, comparing hir face vnto Venus,
hir haire vnto golde, hir eyes vnto starres: naye
more, resembling hir chastitie vnto Diana, when
they seeke onely to make hir as common as Lais, then
howe hir feature hath fired their fancie, howe hir
sight hath besotted their sences, howe beautie hath
bewitched them, paynting out their passions as
Appelles did puppettes for children, which inwardly

framed of claye, were outwardlye trickt vppe with freshe colours, they plunge in paine, they waile in woe, they turne the restlesse stone with Syssyphus, and alleage the tormentes of Tantalus, what griefe, what payne, what sorrow, what sighs, what teares, what plaintes, what passions, what tortures, what death is it not they indure till they optaine their mistresse favour, which got, infamie concludeth the tragedie with repentance: so that I allow those pleasing poems of Guazzo, which begin: Chi spinto d amore, thus englished.

He that appaled with lust would saile in hast to Corinthum,
There to be taught in Layis schoule to seeke for a mistresse,
Is to be traind in Venus troupe and changd to the purpose,
Rage imbraced but reason quite thrust out as on exile,
Pleasure a paine rest tournd to be care and mirth as a madnesse
Firie mindes inflamd with a looke inraged as Alecto,
Quaint in aray, sighs fetcht from farre, and teares marie fained,
Pen sicke sore depe plungd in paine, not a place but his hart whole,
Daies in griefe and nights consumed to thinke on a goddesse,
Broken sleeps, swete dreams, but short fro the night to the morning
Venus dasht his mistresse face as bright as Apollo,
Helena staind the golden ball wrong giuen by the sheeheard,
Haires of gold eyes twinckling starres hir lips to be rubies,
Teeth of pearle hir brests like snow hir cheekes to be roses.
Sugar candie she is as I gesse fro the wast to the kneestead.
Nought is amisse no fault were found if soule were amended.
All were bliss if such fond lust led not to repentance.

So that of these verses I conclude, that such young Gentlemen as tickled with lust, seeke to please their senses with such pernicious delights, may iustly come within the compasse of this folly: may (quoth the Ladie Margarite) let the selfe same predicament comprehende such fantastike poets, as spende their times in penning downe pamphelts of loue, who with Ouid seke to nourish vice in Rome by setting downe Artem amandi, and giuing dishonest precepts of lust and leacherie, corrupting youth with the expence of time vpon

such friuolous fables: and therefore deserue by Augustus to be banished from so ciuill a countrie as Italie, amongest the barbarous Getes to liue in exile. Stay there, quoth messieur Benedetto, your commission is too large, and your censures too Satyricall, we read not that any woman was euer Stoicke or Cynicke, either to be so strict in passions, or bitter in inuectiues, and to write of loue not to fauour the follie, but to condemne the fault: and therefore Madam either be more partiall or more particular. These glances (quoth Farneze) are nothing to the purpose, and therefore seignior Cosimo to your charge: I knowe sir, answered Cosimo, that Madam Frances hath said well, in painting out the phantasticke description of a louer, yet hath she béene fauourable in figuring out their follies: for this loue or rather lust endeth not, till it tasteth of the very dregges of adulterous lechery, a folly, nay a sinne so in hate with God and contempt with man, as Seleucus forbad it to be named amongst the Locrians. The ende of concupiscence is luxuria, sayth Socrates in his disputation with Euthydemus, frõ whom floweth, as from a sea of wickednes incest, murther, poison, violéce, subuersiõ of kingdoms and infinit other impieties. Aristotle being demanded what adulterie was, made answer, a curious inquiry after an other mans loue, and being desired to penne downe the effects, wrote these or such like wordes. He that séeketh by a plausible shadow of flattery to seduce a minde from chastity to adulterie, sinneth against the law of nature in defrauding a man of his due, his honour and reputation, spoiling him of a most pretious iewell, which is the losse of his wiues loue and frendship: for as the sethim trée being cut or pearced with brasse straight perisheth, so the league of marriage violated by adultery extinguisheth loue, and leaueth behinde

hind at the moſt, nought but the painted vale of flatterie, the peace of the houſe is changed into diſcorde, diſſention in ſteade of laurell preſenteth a ſword, and content ſléepeth not with Mercuries melodie, but waketh with Alectos diſquiet, the face that in forme being honeſt, reſembleth the ſunne in beautie, ſtained with adulterie, bluſheth to ſée the ſame as guiltie of hir owne deformitie, credit hath ſuffered ſhipwracke and fame as ſpotted with the foyle of diſhonour, all theſe hatefull diſcommodities inſuing by the voluptuous deſire of ſuch young Gentlemen, as wedded to vanitie, glory in the title of this folly. I maruel then, quoth Peratio, what woman (theſe effects conſidered) will liſten vnto the melody of ſuch Syrens, whoſe alluremētes perſwades them to ſuche miſfortunes, or howe they can thinke that man to loue them, which by fulfilling his momentary luſt, procureth their perpetuall diſcredit and ſubuerſion both of ſoule and bodie. Know you not (quoth Benedetto) the reaſon of that, are not the thoughts of women like the inhabitants of Scyrum, which knowing that the ſauour of Dates is deadly vnto their complexion, yet neuer ceaſe till they dye with Dates in their mouthes. You miſtake it, quoth the Lady Frances, it is becauſe men conſume them ſelues into teares with the Crocodile, till they haue gotten their pray, and then they neither reſpect their honour nor honeſtie. Howſoeuer it bée, quoth Coſimo, I haue not to deale with women. but for our Florentines, I knowe none more addicted vnto this folly, which to conclude, hath bene ſo odious amongſt our anceſtaurs, that it hath beene chaſtned with ſeuere punishmentes. Alexander greatly blamed Caſſander, becauſe hee offered but to kiſſe a minſtrels mayde. Auguſtus Cæſar made the lawe Iulia, which permitted the father to

kill

kill the daughter for adulterie. Cato banished a Senator for killing his wife in his daughters presence. Marcus Antonius Carcalla was banished his Empire for lust, with infinite other, whose miseries, mishappes, and misfortunes were innumerable onely by this folly, as Tarquinus Superbus for Lucrece, Appius Claudius for Virginia, Iulius Cæsar for Cleopatra, Iohn Countis Armiake for his owne sister, Anthonie Venereus duke of Venice for his Secretaries wife, Abusahid king of Fez for the wife of Cosimo de Cheri, as Leon in his description of Affrike setteth downe: but amongest all these Gentles, an history at large for the confirmation of this my discourse.

THE TALE OF Cosimo.

WHile Ninus the sonne of Belus raigned as Soueraigne ouer the dominions of Egypt, and kept his Court Royall in Babylon, there dwelled in the suburbes of the Citie a poore labouring man called Mænon, who was more honest than wealthye, and yet sufficiently rich, for that hee lined contente amongest his neighbours, this poore man accounted his possessions large enough, as longe as hee enioyed and possessed his grounde in quiet, imitating Cyncynatus in his labours, who founde health of bodie and quiet of mind the chiefest treasure, by tilling his fielde with continual toyle. But as content had satisfied his thoghts in this

this, so Mænon was as greatly fauoured of Fortune, for he had a wife of the same degree and parentage, so beautifull, as there was none so faire in Babylon, so honest, as there was none more vertuous, so courteous, that there was not one in the whole city who did did not both loue and like of Semyramis the wife of Mænon, for so was hir name: insomuch that Ninus desired to haue a sight of hir beauty, and in disguised apparell, went to the poore mans house, where seeing such a heauenly saint about hir homely huswifery, fitter (as he thought) to be a paramour for a prince, than a wife for a subiect, sighed and sorrowed that she was not in his power to commande: yet fauouring hir in that she was honest, as fancying hir for that she was beautifull, he departed with resolution to be maister of his owne affections, and not to depriue the poore man of so great good. After he was returned to the palace and was solitarie by him selfe, the Idea of hir perfection representing a humane shape of a heauenly creature, so assaulted his minde with sundry passions, that giuing the raines of libertie to his wanton appetites, he fell into these tearmes. Vnhappy Ninus, and therefore vnhappy because a king and subiect to sensuality, shall the middle of thy yeares bee worse than the prime of thy youth, shall loue conquer that Fortune could neuer subdue, shall the heats of affection searche that in the frute that it coulde neuer hurt in the budde, shalt thou gouerne a kingdome and canst not subdue thine owne passions? Peace Ninus name not so much as loue, race out fancy with silence, and let the continency of other kings be presidents for thee to direct thy course aright. Alexander made a conquest of his thoughts, when the beauty of Darius wife bad him battell. Cyrus abstained from the sight of Panthea, because he would not be intemperate. Pom-

pey

pey would not ſpeak to the wife of Demetrius his frã man for that ſhee was faire, and what of this Ninus? Yet had Alexander concubines, Cyrus a lemman, and Pompey was not ſo chaſt, but he liked Phrinia, and ſo maiſt thou make a choice of Semyramis, ſhee is poore and vnfit for a king, I but ſhe is faire, and fit for none but a king, loue filleth not the hand with pelfe, but the eie with pleaſure, ſhee is honeſt, truth, but thou art a monarch, and the waight of a ſcepter is able to breake the ſtrongeſt chaſtitie: but that is more Nynus, ſhee is another mans wife, but her huſbande is thy ſubiecte, whom thou maieſt command, and hee dare not but obey: haue not beggers their affectiõs as well as kings? may not Semyramis, nay doth ſhe not loue poore Mænon better than euer ſhee will like Nynus, yes, for crownes are as farre from Cupid as cottages, princes haue no more priuiledge ouer fancie than peaſants: yet Nynus feare not; loue and fortune fauoureth not cowards, command Semyramis; nay, conſtraine Semyramis to loue thée, and vppon this reſolue, for kings muſt haue power both ouer men and loue. Nynus reſting vpon this reſolution, determined to trie the mind of Semyramis how ſhee was affected towards her huſband, and therefore diſpatch a Letter to her to this effect.

It may ſeeme ſtrange Semyramis, that the monarch of Egypt ſhould write to the wife of a poore labourer, ſeeing the proportion of our degrees are ſo far vnequall, but if it bee conſidered that kinges are but men, and therfore ſubiect to paſſions, ſooner ſhalt thou haue cauſe to ſorrow for my griefes, than muſe at my writings. Did my deſire aime at a kingnome, I wold attempt to ſatiſfie deſire with my ſword? Did enuie crie for content, then coulde I ſeeke to reuenge: were my thoughtrs as inſatiate as Midas, the worlde is a

storehouse of treasures, these desires are to be satisfied with friends or fortune, but the restlesse sorrowe that so pincheth my minde with disquiet, onely resteth in thy power to appease. It is Semyramis the deitie of beautie, which is priuiledged farre aboue dignitie, that Gods haue obeyed, and men cannot resist, the sight of thy perfection entered at the eie, the report of thy vertues tickling the eare, and both ioynctly assaulting the heart with sharp and furious alarums haue so snared my minde, as naught pleaseth the eies that is not thy obiect, and nothing contenteth the eare but *Semyramis*. Seeing then the Egyptian monarch, who hath triumphed ouer all the nations of the South and East climate with many bloudie conquestes, is by them brought as a captiue, seruile to thy beautie & his owne passions, boast that loue hath lotted thee such a victory, and be not ingrateful to the Gods, by denying me that I deserue, fauour. But perhaps thou wilt obiect thou art married, and therefore tyed to poore Mænon, (for loue hath taught me thy husbands name) that honestie beareth blossoms as wel in a cottage, as in the court, that vertue harboreth as sone with beggers as princes, that fame or infamie can stoup as low as they can soare high, that report and enuie sooner clingeth want than plentie, this *Semyramis* I confesse, but yet the picture of the eagle placed ouer the temple of Venus, feared the faulcon for offending her doues. Damætas popiniay pearched vnder a dragon of brasse to auoide the vultures tyrannies: dishonour toucheth not the vesture of a king, and the concubines of princes purchase renowme, not infamie: Mænon is poore, and will toy to haue such a riuall as Nynus, the want of Semyramis darkens the glorie of her beautie, which the loue of a king shall inrich with ornaments. Then *Semyramis* pittie his plaintes, who is thy soueraigne

and

and might command, and yet desirous to be thy paramour, seekes a conquest, not by constraint, but by intreaties: in graunting which thou climbest to dignitie, and sleepest at the foote of a scepter, honour and quiet entertaines thee with delight, and to these thou addest thy friends preferment and thy husbands welfare: if as thou art poore, thou art proud, and selfe conceit armes thee with disdaine, consider that the counterfait of kings cannot bee drawen without the shadowes of duetie, and that the pill that purgeth the cholar of a prince is reuenge. This thinke, and farewell.

Nynus Monarch of Egypt.

He committed this Letter to the charge of one of his Secretaries, whom he made priuy to the contents, who poasting in hast to the house of *Semiramis*, found her bringing one of her babes asleepe with a song. The Secretarie delighted with the pleasing harmonie of her voice, stood a little listning to her melodie, at last stepped into the house, at whose presence the poore woman amazed, for that her cottage was not accustomed to such guests, she blusht, which gaue such a glory to her former beautie, and such a president of her inward vertue, that the Secretarie enuied the happie placing of his soueraines passions, yet after her homely fashiõ she intertained him, greatly fearing when he deliuered her the letters, ỹ they had bin some warrant to apprehend her husband for some fault, but by the superscription she perceiued they were directed to hir, hauing set before ỹ secretarie a messe of creame to busie him, she stept aside to read the contents, which whẽ she perceiued and wel noted the effects, not onely alluring with promises but perswading with threats, she burst into teares, cursing that daie where ỹ king had

a sight of her face as dismall and infortunate, falling at last from teares into these tearefull complaints: Are the destinies (poore Semyramis) fore-pointers of good or ill, so inequall allotters of mishappe, that some they blesse with daily fauours, and others they crosse with continuall hard fortunes? Had the fates no proportion in their censures? could it not suffice thou were poore, but thou must be miserable? cannot enuie paint the picture of content at thy cottage doore, but she must grudge? is there no shrub so low, but is subiect to the winde: no woman so poore if shee bee faire, but some blasing her beautie aimeth at her chastitie? Then Semyramis be patient but resolute, rather choose despite and sorrow than disgrace and infamie. Is labour an enemie to loue, howe then shoulde affection touch mee who am neuer idle? therefore fond foole, doth loue enuie thee, because thou art not idle, but by labour shewest thy selfe a recreant to his law. But yet Semyramis consider who it is that perswades thee to loue, Ninus a king, a monarch, and thy soueraigne, one whose maiestie may shadowe thy misse, and whose verie name may warrant thee from the preiudice of enuie, if thou offend, dignitie counteruailes the fault, and fame dare not but honour the concubines of kings. For shame Semyramis sooth not thy selfe in such follies, are not kings seates obiects for euerie eie to gase at? Are not their actions censured by euerie base person? As the pyramides are markes for the sea, so their doings are notes for the world: Doth not fame builde in the foreheads of princes? yes Semyramis, kings faults though they are passed ouer with feare, yet they are iudged of with murmure: the greater the dignitie, the greater the offence, shame followeth vice euerie where, and adulterie, if lawes were not partiall, deserueth punishment as well in a king as in a begger. Mænon is

poore,

poore, but thy husband, in louing him thou pleasest the Gods, Nynus is rich and a monarch, in contenting him thou dishonourest thy selfe and discontentest the heauens: hath Babylon counted thée faire, so thou art still by reseruing thy beautie: hath Babylon counted thee honest: so remaine still by preseruing thy chastitie: be not more charie ouer thy beautie than ouer thine honestie, for many knowe thée by fame that neuer sawe thy face. Then Semyramis, aunswere the kings passions with denial, but alas he threatneth reuenge, swéeter it is to die with credit thã liue with infamy. Then why staiest thou thus fondly debating with thy selfe, reply as one that preferreth fame before life, and with that she slept to a standish, and taking paper wrote a Letter to this effect.

Kings are Gods, not that they are immortall, but for they are vertuous: Princes haue no priuiledge to do ill, Fame is not partial in her trumpe: the chiefest treasure is not golde, but honour, to conquere a kingdome is a fauour of fortune, to subdue affection is a gift from the Gods, lone in kings is princely, but lust is pernitious: kinges therefore weare crownes, because they should be iust: iustice giue euerie one his due, *Semiramis* is Mænons wife, and therfore his inheritance: the Gods threaten Princes as well as poore men: hot loue is soone colde: the eie is variable, inconstant and insatiate: Adulterie is odious, though graced with a scepter, beutie is a slipperie good, Princes concubines prise honour too deare, in selling the precious iewell of honestie for golde: death is a farre more swéete than discredite, fame to bee preferred before friendes, Nynus is a king, whose seate is sure sancturie for the oppressed, *Semiramis* is poore, yet honest, loue of Mænon in her youth, and loyall to

him in hir age, resolued rather to dye than be proued vnchast: subiects pray for their soueraignes, wishing they may liue princely and dye vertuous.

Semyramis the faithfull wife of poore Mænon.

This confused chaos of principles being written and sealed vp, she deliuered it to the Secretarie, who courteously taking his leaue hied in hast to the Court, where the king carefully expecting his comming, receiuing the letter vnript the seales, where in stead of an amorous reply, he found nothing but a heape of philosophicall axiomes, and yet his doome answered to the full: the pithie sentences of Semyramis whome by hir penne he found to be poore, honest, beautifull, and wise did not take y effect, which poore soule she aimed at, for in stead of cooling his desires with good counsayle, she inflamed his mind with a deeper affection: for where before he onely was allured with hir beautie, nowe he was entised with hir wisedome. Pallas gaue him a deeper wounde than Venus, and the inwarde vertues were more forcible than the outwarde shadowes: so that he persisted in his passions, and began to consider with himselfe, that the meanes to procure his content, was onely the simplicitie of Mænon, with whome he woulde make an exchange rather than be frustrate of his desire, an exchange (I meane) for Ninus being a widower had one onely childe, which was a daughter, about the age of sixteene yeares, hir he determined to giue in marriage vnto Mænon, rather than he would not enioy Semyramis, thinking that the feare of his displeasure, the burthen of his owne pouertie, the hope of preferrement, the tickling conceit of dignity would force the poore vassall to looke twise on his faire wife before he refused suche a proffer: thinking

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ing this pretence to bee his beſt pollicie, hee reſolued preſentlye to put it in execution: and therefore foorthwith commaũded a Purſuiuant to fetche Mænon vnto the Court, who comming with commiſſion vnto the poore mans-houſe, founde him and his wife at dinner, to whome, after he had declared the ſumme of his meſſage, he departed, willing him with as much ſpéede as might be to repaire vnto the Court. Mænon although amazed with this newes, yet for that his conſcience was cléere feared not, but with as much haſt as was poſſible, made him ſelfe readie to goe. Semyramis diſſembled the matter, fetcht hir huſbande foorth his newe hoſe, and his beſt iacket, thinking to ſponge him vp after the cleanlieſt faſhion, that Ninus might ſée ſhe had cauſe to loue and like ſo proper a man: ſetting hir huſbande therefore foorth in print, he toke his waye vnto the Court, where at the gate the Secretarie awayted to bring him into preſence, whither no ſoner hee was entered, but the King takinge the poore man aſide, beganne to common with him in this manner.

Mænon for the Soueraigne to make a long diſcourſe vnto the ſubiect were friuolous, ſéeing as the one for his maieſtie is priuiledged to commande and conſtrayne, ſo the other by obedience is tyed to obeye: therefore omitting all néedleſſe preambles, thus to the purpoſe: Mænon thou art poore, and yet a Lorde ouer Fortune, for that I heare thou art content, for it is not richeſſe to haue much, but to deſire little, yet to thy want thou haſt ſuch a fauour graunted thee by the Deſtinies, as euerie waie may countervayle thy pouertie, I meane the poſſeſſion of thy wife Semyramis, whome mine eye can witneſſe to be paſſing faire and beautifull:

enuie that grudged at thy happinesse, and loue that frowned at my libertie, ioyning their forces together, haue so disquieted my minde with sundrie passions, as onely it lies in thy power to mittigate the cause of my martyrdome, for know Mænon, I am in loue with thy wife, a censure I knowe, which will bee hard for thee to digest, and yet to be borne with more patience, for that thou hast a king and thy soueraigne to bee thy riuall, her Mænon I craue of thée to bee my concubine, which if thou grant not, thinke as nowe thou hast pouertie with quiet, so then thou shalt haue both content & dignitie. The poore man who thought by the kings spæches that his wife had bene consenting to this pretence, framed the king this answere.

I knowe right mightie soueraigne, that Princes may command, where poore men cannot intreate, that the title of a king is a writ of priuiledge in the court of Loue, that chastitie is of small force to resist, where wealth and dignitie ioyned in league, are armed to assault, kings are warranted to command, and subiects to obey, therefore if Semiramis be content to grant the interest of her affections into your maiesties hands, I am resolued to redeliuer vp my fee simple with patience. Do Mænon, qd Ninus, as thy wife is faire, so she is honest, and therefore where I cannot command I will them constraine, I meane that thou force her to loue me. Mænon grieuing at the woordes of the king, made this replie. If my wife, mightie Ninus, bee contented to preferre a cottage before a crowne, and the person of a poore labourer before the loue of a Prince, let me not (good my Lord) be so vnnaturall as to resolue vpon such a villanie, as the very beasts abhorre to commit, the lion killeth the lyoneſſe beeing taken in adulterie, the swanne killeth her make for suspition of the same fault, and shall I whom reason willeth to be cha-

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charie of my choise, force my wife perforce to such a folly: pardon my liege, neuer shall the loyaltie of my wife be reuenged with such treachery, rather had I suffer death than be appeached of suche discourtesie. Ninus hearing the poore man so resolute, thought there was no adder so deafe, but had his charme, no bird so fickle but had hir call, no man so obstinat but by some meanes might be reclaimed, therfore he made him this answer. Mænnon be not so fonde as to preferre fancie before life, nor so insolent as to refuse the fauour of a king, for the affection of an inconstant woman, though I meane to depriue thee of a present ioy, so I meane to counteruaile it with a greater blisse, for the exchange of Semyramis, I meane to giue thée my daughter Sarencida in marriage, so of a subiect to make thee a sonne and my equall, so that nothing shall be different betwixt vs but a crowne and a kingdom, for a poore wife thou shalt haue a rich princesse, from pouertie thou shalt rise to honour, from a begger to a duke: consider with thy selfe then Mænon, how I fauour thée, which might possesse my desire by thy death, and yet séeke it at thy handes by intreatie and preferrement: take time now by the forehead, she is bald behinde, and in letting hir turne hir backe, thou bidst fare well to opportunity, if thou refuse dignitie, my daughter and the fauour of a soueraigne, hope not to liue nor inioy thy wife, for this censure holde for an oracle, Ninus before night will enioy the loue of Semyramis. This seuere resolution of the king drone poore Mænon into a thousande sundry passions, for he considered with him selfe Semyramis was a woman, and in the middle of hir age, and though she were beautifull she was but a woman, and had hir equals: he knew that Sarencida was honourable, of royall parentage, the daughter of a king, beautifull, young,

and riche: he felt pouertie to be the sister of distresse, and that there was no greater woe than want, dignitie presented to his imagination the glory that dwells from honour, the sweete content that preferrement affordes, and howe princely a thing it was to be the sonne in law to a king, these vnacquainted thoughts sore troubled the minde of the poore man, but when he called to remembrance the constancie of Semyramis, how the motion of suche a mightie monarch, was in vaine to mitigate one sparke of hir affection, that neither dignitie, nor death, no not the maiestie of a king coulde perswade hir to falsifie hir faith, returned Ninus this answer. As (my liege) kings haue honour to countenance their actions, so poore men haue honestie whereby to direct their liues. Diogenes was as desirous of good fame, as Alexander was of glory. Pouertie is as glad to creepe to credite, as dignitie, and the thoughts that smoke from a cottage, are oft as sweete a sacrifice to the gods, as the perfumes of princes: the heauens are equall allotters of mishap, and the destinies impartiall in their censure: for as oft doeth reuenge followe maiestie for iniustice, as pouertie for doing amisse, the one offendes with intent, the other either by ignorance, or necessitie: then my Liege, if your Highnesse offer me wrong, by taking away my wife perforce, assure your selfe that honour is no priuiledge against infamie, neyther will the gods sleepe in reuenge of poore Mænon: for your proffers: knowe this, I account preferment in ill discredite, not dignitie, and the fauour of a Prince in wickednesse, the frowne of God in iustice for your daughter, I am sorie the vnbrideled furie of lust shoulde so farre ouerrule the lawe of nature, as to alienate the loue of a father for such follie: her I vtterly refuse, not that I contemne the Princesse, but

but that I pitie hir estate, and wishe hir better Fortune: for death which your highnesse threatens, I scorne it, as prefering an honest fame before mishap, and the losse of my wife before death, were it neuer so terrible, for pouertie denies me to make other requitall for hir vnfayned affection, than constancie, which I will pay as hir due, though with the losse of my life, why shoulde not the examples which historiographers pennes downe for presidentes, serue as trumpettes to incourage poore men in honest and honourable resolutions: when Marcus Lepidus the Romane Consult was driuen into banishment, and hearde that the Senate in despighte had giuen his wife vnto an other, he presently died for sorrowe: when Nero the tyrant (pardon my liege I inferre no comparisons) inflamed with lust towardes the wife of Sylaus, a Romane, neither respecting the law Iulia made to the controrie, by his predecessor Augustus, neither iustice nor the gods, but opposing himselfe to the heauens, reft the poore citizen of his wife.

Sylaus slewe him selfe at the pallace gate, which brought the Emperour in great hate with his Commons. I inferre not these examples as fearefull of your Highnesse disfauour, but as one determined to followe these Romanes in their fortunes, and eyther with quiet to liue still the husbande of Semyramis in Babylon, or to let the worlde witnesse I neuer was so cowardly to deliuer vp so deare an interest, but by death. Nynus storming at the answere which poore Mænon made, did not take his speeches as perswasions from his follye, but as preparatiues to further choller: for so deepe was the vnsatiable desire of filthie lust ingrauen and imprinted in his minds, and the fowle imagination

of adulterous thoughtes had so blinded his senses, that as a man halfe fraught with a lunacie he became furious, that in a rage taking a sword that hong at his beds head, he rusht vpon the poore man and slue him: this cruell deede being thus vniustly executed, he felt no remorse in his conscience, but as a man wholly soulde ouer vnto mischiefe, proceeded in his purpose, and presently sent his Secretarie for Semyramis: who no sooner heard the message, but fearing that hir husband for hir cause might come to mishap, in hir worst attire, as she was, hied to the Court, where being brought into the kings chamber, Ninus hauing causeth the dead body before to be carried away, told hir briefly all the matter, howe hir husbande was slaine, and that nowe he had sent for hir not to make hir his concubine but quéene. Semyramis no sooner heard of the death of hir husbande, but she fell into a pasme, and was hardly brought to life, but at last being reuiued she burst forth into fountaines of teares, & into bitter exclamations against the tyrant, who sought to appease hir with sundrie swéete promises, but séeing nothing could preuaile, he sent for his daughter Sarencida to whom he committed the charge of Semyramis, as of one that shoulde be a quéene and hir mother, Sarencida as nothing daring (whatsoeuer she thought) to disobey hir fathers commande, led hir by the hand into hir chamber, & as womens perswasiues are best confectaries for womens sorrowes, did somewhat mitigate some parte of hir griefe that shee ceasst from hir teares, till at night being alone in hir bed, the Idea of hir husbandes person presented it selfe, though not an obiect to hir eyes, yet to hir imagination, that ouercome with the passions of loue, thinking to take the benefit of the place and time, & determining to follow hir husband in his fortunes, toke hir knife in hir

hand

hande, and ſtanding in hir ſmocke by the bed ſide, fell into theſe furious tearmes. *Semyramis* this day hath bæne the beginning of thy ſorrowes and the end of thy good fortunes, the fame of thine honeſtie ſo generally blazed abroade through all Babylon, ſhall this day without deſert be ſpotted with infamie, the bloudie action of Ninus ſhall be attributed to thée for a fault, and the intent of his death harbour vnder the ſuſpition of thy diſhoneſty, if thou liueſt and become quæne, yet ſhall this dæde make thée a table talke amongeſt beggers, honour ſhall not priuiledge thée from the hate of them which are honeſt, neither ſhall the glorie of a crowne ſhrowd thée from diſcredit. When *Semyramis* ſæing thou ſækeſt after fame, ſéeke not to liue, vſe the knife thou haſt in hand, as a meanes to requite thy huſbands loue, and to warrant thy former honeſtie: *Panthea* the wife of *Abradatus*, ſæing hir huſbande ſlaine in the campe of *Cyrus*, ſacrificed hir ſelfe on his dead corps: when *Iulia* the wife of *Pompey* ſaw but a gowne of hir huſbands bloudy, ſuſpecting ſome miſhap, fell into a trance, & neuer reuiued. *Portia* the wife of *Brutus* hearing of hir huſbãds death, choked hir ſelf with hot burning coales. *Aria* the wif of *Cæcinna* died with her condemned huſband before the capitoll. Let the reſolute loue of theſe noble dames incourage thée to the like conſtancy, conſider *Semyramis* thy huſbande is deade, and déedes done can not be reuoked. *Ninus* meanes to make thée his wife: his wife coward-ly wretch as thou art, anſwer to this foliſh obiection which *Piſca* the wife of *Pandoerus* did, who being ſlaine by the king of *Perſia*, after the ſlaughter of hir huſbande, he proferd hir marriage, but holding as thou doeſt, the inſtrument of death in hir hand, ſhe vttered theſe wordes: The Gods forbid, that to be a quéene, I ſhoulde euer wed him that hath bæne the

murtherer of my deare husband. And with this shee was readie to stab her selfe to the heart, but staying her selfe and pansing a while, she beganne as women are prone to conceit reuenge, to thinke with her selfe how in time better to quite the iniury proffered by Nynus to her poore husbande. This Gentlemen, I coniecture was her imagination, for she sodainly let fall her knife, leapt into her bed, & past the rest of the night in a sound sléepe. And in déede had not the sequele proued the contrarie, it might haue ben coniectured that the hope of a crowne had bene a great perswasion from her desperate resolution: but letting these supposes passe, to Nynus, who made it his mornings worke, as soone as he was vp to visite Semyramis, and finding her in a better tune than he left her, conceiued such ioy in the appeasing of her passions, that presently he sommond all his Lordes to a Parliament, where hée vnfolded vnto them the intent hee had to make Semyramis quéene, and therefore craued their consents. The nobilitie whatsoeuer they thought, durst not gainsaie the will of their Prince, but assented to his demand, so that all things were prepared for the coronation: but when the brute of Mænons death was noised abroade in Babylon, euerie one after their sundrie and seuerall imaginations began to conferre of the action, all generally meruailing that so honest a wife shuld commit so hainous a fact, for euerie one thought her an actor in the tragedie, yet they considered that ambitious honour was a mortall enemie to honestie, and that few women were so chast but dignitie could draw to follie. Well, murmure what they list, the kings purpose tooke effect. The daie came, and the coronation was most solemnely and sumptuouslie perfourmed, the king conceiuing such felicitie in his newe wife, that hée continued the feast for tenne dayes: which

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tearme ended, euerie one departed to their home, and the late married couple liued so contentedly to euerie mans coniectured, that Semyramis won her fame halfe lost by her obedience, and especially shee gained the loue of the commons, for preferment had not pufte her vp with pride, nor dignitie made her disdainfull of the glorie of a crowne, nor the title of a quéene had made no metamorphosis of her minde, but in this, that as she grew in honour, so she increased in courtesie, bountifull to all that were poore, and enuious to none that were noble, preferring the sutes of them were wronged, and seeming as neere as shée coulde to cause the king doe iustice to all. This her vertuous disposition not onely stole the hearts of the commons, but also the loue of her husband, who to increase affection more had a sonne by her called Nynus. Passing thus three or foure yeeres in great pleasure, the king surcharged with content, commaunded his wife to aske whatsoeuer she woulde, that was within the compasse of his Babylonish monarch, and it should bee graunted her. Semyramis refused such a proffer, but the king beeing vrgent, semmoned all his Lordes to the Court, and there made them priuie what a frée graunt he made to his wife. The noble men although smiling at the fondnesse of the king, that so wilfully woulde put a naked sworde into a madde mans hande, yet outwardly seemed to allowe of his will, so that Semyramis demanded that she might absolutely without checke or controlement rule the Babylonian Empire, as sole quéene for thrée daies. The king who no whit mistrusted that reuenge could so long harbour in the heart of a woman, graunted her request, and therefore presently with all conuenient spéede caused a sumptuous scaffolde in forme of a Theatre to

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be erected in the middeſt of Babylon, whither cal-ling his nobles and commons by the ſound of a trum-pet vpon the next feſtiuall, which was holden in ho-nour of their God Iphis, he there in preſence of all his ſubiectes, reſigned vp his crowne and ſcepter into the handes of Semyramis, placing hir in the Imperiall throne, as ſole quéene, monarch and gouerneſſe of E-gypt. Semyramis being thus inueſted with the Dia-deame and regall power: firſt publikely declared the effect of the kiugs grant, how ſhe was for the tearme and ſpace of thrée dayes to reigne as ſoueraigne ouer the land, to haue as great authoritie to do iuſtice, and to execute martiall law as hir huſbande: to confirme which, Ninus as a ſubiect did hir reuerence, and ioint-ly with the reſt of the nobility, ſwore to performe whatſoeuer ſhe ſhoulde commande, and to obey hir as their ſole and ſoueraigne princes. After the king had ſolemnely taken his oath, Semyramis vttered theſe or ſuch like ſpæches to the people. It is not vnknowne (worthy péeres of Egypt and inhabitantes of Baby-lon) that I liued in my youth the wife of poore Mæ-non with credit fit for my degrée, and with fame e-quall to the honeſty of my life. Occaſion neuer armed report to ſtaine me with diſgrace, neither was the wife of Mænon accounted to be prodigall of hir affec-tions, although perhaps a little proud of hir beautie, the pouertie of my huſbande neuer touched me with miſlike, nor the proffers of preferrement coulde per-ſwade me to inconſtancie, but Fortune that is euer fickle in hir fauours, and enuie that grudgeth at quiet, ſeeing we liued ſecurely in loue and content, ſet king Ninus to be the meanes of my ouerthrow: for he in-flamed with the ſight of my beautie, yelded preſently to the allaromes of luſt, and ſought with the golden baite of dignitie to hale me on to the wracke of my

honeſty.

honestie, which by no meanes he could bring to passe: toyning murther with the pretence of adulterie, hee slew my husband in his bed chamber, so the better to obtaine his purpose. After whome, I call the Gods to witnes, I haue lined for no other cause but to see this day, neither hath the gaine of a crowne counteruailed my former content, the glistering shewe of dignitie hath not tickled my minde with delight, the vaine pleasure of preferment neuer made me proude, onelie (worthie peeres of Egypt) the hope that one daie I should make reuenge of poore Mænons iniurie, hath made me liue in such contented patience, which nowe is come, for it befitteth a quæne in iustice to be impartiall, and two mischieues are neuer founde to escape mishap: therefore how saiest thou Nynus, quoth shee, declare heere before the Lordes and commons of Egypt, wert thou not the sole murtherer of my husband without my consent? Nynus aunswered as one halfe afraide at the countenance of *Semyramis*, I confesse that onely Mænon was murthered by me, but for the loue of thee, which I hope thou holdest not in memorie while this time. Yes Nynus, and now will I reuenge the iniurie offered to Mænon, and therefore I command that without further delaie thy head bee heere smitten off, as a punishment due for murther and adulterie. The nobilitie and commons hearing the seuere sentence of Semyramis, intreated for the life of their soueraigne, but it was in vaine, for she departed not from the scaffolde till shee sawe her command executed: which done, she intombed his bodie roiallie, and in so famous a sepulchre, that it was one of the seuen wonders of the world, and after swaied the kingdome with politike gouernment vntill her sonne Nynus was of age to rule the kingdome.

Seignior Cosimo having ended his tale, Farneze greatly commended the discourse, applying the effect of this historie to the Gentlemen present, telling them that in deede the youth of Florence were greatlie giuen to this folly, as a vice prædominant amongest them. Peratio who meant to be pleasant with the olde Countie, tolde him that he had learned this fruit in Astronomie, that the influence of Venus and Saturn kept the same constellation to inferre as wel age as youth, and that respect and experience had taught him, that olde men were like leekes gray headed, and oft græne tailde, that they would finde ons foote at the doore for a young wife, when the other stumbled in the graue to death, so that Diogenes being demanded where a man left off from lust: vnlesse, quoth he, he be vertuous, not vntill the coffin be brought to his doors, meaning that time neuer woze out this follie but by death. And yet to see, quoth Benedetto, what cynicall axiomes age wil prescribe to youth, when they themselues are neuer able to performe their owne precepts, allowing more priuiledge to their siluer haires, than to our greene yeeres, and shrouding vnder the shadowe of vertue the verie substance of vice, beeing as intemperate in the frostie winter of their age, as we in the glowing summer of our youth, and yet for that they are olde, and though they cannot deale more caute, yet will worke more caute, and simplie conceale that wee rashlie reueale, they are in age generally taken for Gods, when compared euen with youth they are mære deuils. Yet by your leaue messieur Benedetto, quoth the Ladie Margeret, you speake too generally of age, for the verie constitution of the naturall temperature of our bodies is able to infringe your reasons, seeing that same naturalis calor is ouerpressed with a cold drinesse in age, which in youth furthered with moisture,

causeth

rauſeth ſuch voluptuous motions. Cupid is painted a childe, Venus without wrinkles in her face, and they which calculate the influence of Saturne, ſet not down many notes of venerie. How philoſophically you ſpeake, quoth Peratio, and yet ſmall to the purpoſe, for although naturall heate be extinguiſhed in age, yet remaines there in the minde certain Scyntillulæ voluptatis, which confirmed by a ſaturnall impreſſion, were harder to root out than were they newly ſprong up in youth, neither did meſſieur Benedetto conclude generally of olde men, but brought in as a premiſſe or propoſition, that age as well as youth was infected with this folly: but well it is Ladie Margeret, that our diſcourſe ſtretcheth not ſo farre as women, nor to talke of their wanton affections, leaſt happilie we had entied ſuch a labyrinth of their laſciuious vanities, as might haue made vs ſooner deſire our reſt then end the dicourſe. You are alwaies glancing at women, quoth Coſimo, not that your are a Pythagorian, and hate that fere, for ſir I knowe your lippes can digeſt ſuch lettuce, but that your mouth were out of temper if once a daie you had not a woman in your mouth, herein reſembling Marcus Læpidus, who made an invective againſt ſumptuouſneſſe of diet, himſelfe being called the glutton of Rome, not that hee was ſparing in his chéere, but that Athens abſtaining from daintie cates, might leaue the market more ſtored with delicate diſhes.

Benedetto was nipt on the head with this ſharpe replie, eſpecially for that all the whole companie laught to ſee how he anſwered with ſilence, & Farneze about whom the talke began, made this anſwer, I can not denie Gentlemen, but anger is ſubiect to many fowlith and intemperat paſſions, & therfore to be comprehended within the compas of this folly, but neither age

or youth, it breedeth many inormities, so that for this night I will take in hand to send you all to bed with a farewell of foure verses, which I read once in the monastery of Santo Marco in Venice, the author I know not, the verses are these:

Quatuor his pænis Certo afficietur adulter,
Aut Egenus erit, Subita vel morte peribit,
Aut Cadet in causam qua debet Iudice vinci,
Aut aliquod membrum casu vel Crymine perdit.

The time of the night beeing somewhat late, they tooke his iest for a charge, and solempnly taking their leaue, euerie man departed quietlie vnto his lodging.

The third discourse of Follie.

THe morning being come, and the Sun displaying her radiant beames vpon the glomie mantle of the earth, Flora presented her glorious obiectes to the eie, and swéete smelling parfumes to the nose, with the delight of sundrie pleasing and odoriferous flowers, when these young Gentlemen ashamed that Tytan should sommon them from their beddes, passing into the garden, found the olde Countie, his wife and foure daughters walking for health and pleasure in a fresh and gréene arbour, where after they had saluted each other with a mutuall God morrowe, they ioyned all in seuerall parlies, amongst the rest Bernardino spying a marigolde opening his leaues a little by the heate of the Sonne,

pulling

pulling Ladie Frances by the sléeue, began his mor-ning mattens on this manner: The nature of this hearbe, Ladie Frances, which we call the marrigolde, and the Grecians Helitropion, and the Latinistes Sol sequiam, is thought by the ancient Philosophers to bee framed onely by nature, to teach the duetie of a wife towards her husband, for seeing that as Aristides said, a woman was the contrarie of a man: this flower presents a president of her affection, for which waie so euer the Sunne turneth, it still openeth the leaues by degrées, and as ỳ sun declineth, so it shutteth: that Phebus being gone to bed, the marrigolde denies any longer to shew her glorie: so saith Plato, shoulde a good wife imitate her husbands actions, directing her selfe after his course in his presence, being pleasant to content the eie and humour of her husband in his absence with a modest bashfulnes, scarce with the wife of Tarquin to looke out of her windowe. In déede, quoth the Ladie Frances, I haue heard saie, that young mennes wiues and maidens children are alwaies wel taught, no doubt sir, your Oeconomicall preceptes are verie good, and happie is she that heares them and neuer beléeues them, I praie God your wife may bee a marigolde whensoeuer you are married, that to auoide iealousie, you may euer weare her pinde on your sléeue. Peratio ouer hearing stepte in and asked the Ladie Frances if she thought Bernardino woulde be iealous. I haue not, quoth the Ladie, such assured sight in phisognomie, as I dare auouch it for truth, but I promise you sir, the Gentleman is well forehanded and well foreheaded, two of the nine beauties to haue a fine finger and a large browe, nowe take the paines to conclude how you list. Peratio laught, and Bernardino replied, tis no mernaile if men bée iealous, when Hesiodus affirmes, that hee which

trusteth

trusteth to the loue of a woman, resembleth him that hangs by the leaues of trées in Autumne. But in earnest Bernardino, quoth Peratio, what doest thinke of him that is married? That hee is quoth he, arested with a grieuous action, for no doubt young Gentlemen shoulde flie vp to heauen if they were not kepte backe with such an arest: but for better aunswere to thy question, take the replie of Metellus to Pyso, that asked him why hee married his sonne being so young, and before hee was wise: Because Pyso, quoth hee, if my sonne grow to be wise, he will neuer marrie: nor if you were wise, quoth the Ladie Frances, woulde yee speake so vnreuerently of marriage, but tis no matter, we shall finde you in time like Crates the cynike Philosopher, who inueighing greatly against this honourable societie, was séene begging a peece of bread at Lais doore in Corinth. If the lawe that Ephorius of Lacedemonia constituted were kepte, such as refused marriage should be banished, but I thinke Bernardino, if you were brought within the forfaiture of such a statute, you woulde take that for a iibbe, which a Lacedemonian banisht did, being produced before Lycurgus for the like crime. And what was that madame, quoth Peratio? Marie Sir, quoth shée, being assigned to exile, hee brought forth witnesse that he had begotten thrée children, and vppon that ercuse Lycurgus made the strict lawe against adulterie, yet mittigated before some parte of the punishment. I thinke madame, aunswered Bernardino, the Priest hath a pennie for your banes, your sophistrie is so good for marriage. Onelie Sir, quoth shee, I speake it against such seuere censurers of matrimonie as you are, which, for what cause I knowe not, liuing stale bachelers, are of Appollonius Tianeus opinion, and therefore frame principles. According to your

precepts

preceptes, as no doubt one of your sect did who made these two verses:

L'amor del donna il vin del flasco,
Nul sera bon nel matutina guasco.

Such stoicall Gentlemen as runne into such inconstant and heathenish conclusions, I had as liefe haue their roome as their companie. Bernardino perceiuing the Ladie Frances was halfe angrie, thought rather to recant than make her cholerike, and therefore tolde her his meaning was not to condemne mariage, but meerely to ieast for conference sake. Then sir, quoth she, all is in ieast, and so let vs to the rest of the companie, whome they founde talking with a Cooke that was come to his maister, to knowe if hee woulde haue anie extraordinarie dishe prouided for dinner. No Sir, quoth Farneze, I will aunswere with *Socrates*, if they bee vertuous there is enough, if they bee not, there is too much. The olde Countie tooke occasion hereof to speake of temperaunce in diet, and thus he began. I remember Gentlemen that Tymotheus a Grecian Captaine, hauing supped with Plato in his Academie, at a sober and simple repaste, for their festiuall fare was Olives, cheese, apples, colewortes, bread and wine, tolde the next daie certaine noble men his companions, that they which supped with Plato digest not his viandes in a long time, meaning that wise banquet void of excesse, not to content the bodie with Epicurisme, but to decke the mind with philosophical precepts, such were the feasts of *Socrates*, Zenocrates, and other: the sages which compared the pleasures conceiued in delicates, to the sauour of parfumes, which for all their sweete smell passe alwaie like smoake. The Egyptians vsed in the middest of their banquets to bring in the

anatomie

anatomie of a dead man, that the horrour of the corps might mitigate immoderate delightes. Indede sir, quoth Bernardino, I remember that Alexander before he fell into the Persian delicacy, refused those cookes and patterers that Ada quæne of Caria sent vnto him, saying to the messenger, for my dinner I vse earely rising, for my supper a slender dinner, for he did vse to eat but once a day: so that Plato seeing Dionysius making two meales, reported in Athens hee sawe nothing in Sycillia but a monster, that did fede twise before the sunne set. Cyrus monarch of the Persians in his childhoode, being demanded of his grandfather Astiages, why he would drinke no wine, answered for feare they giue me poison: for (quoth hee) at the celebration of your nativitie, I noted that some haue made mixture of the wine with some inchanted potion, sith at the ende of the feast there was not one departed in his right minde. So did (quoth Perato) Epaminondas the greatest captaine and philosopher in his time, for being invited by a friende of his to supper, the tables ouercharged with superfluitie & sumptuousnesse of fare, he told his host in great choller that he thought he had been requested, as a friend to dine competently, not to suffer iniury by being intertained like a glutton. Caius Fabritius a notable Romane knight, was found by the Samnit ambassadours that came vnto him eating of reddish roasted in the ashes, and that in a veris poore house, and by the waie to induce a strange miracle that Sainct Ierome reporteth of one Paule an heremit, who liued from sixténe to sixtie of Dates onely, and from sixtie to fiue score and fiue (at what time he died) he was fed by a little bread brought to him by a crowe. Truth (quoth Farneze) infinit are the examples which might perswade vs to temperance, but so fonde are we now a dayes as

we

wes leaue the ſtudie of philoſophie to learne out kiſ-
ching commentaries, but if we perſeuere ſtill in this
diſſolute kind of ſuperfluity, being Chriſtians in name
and Epicures in life, we are to feare that in the ende
nede and neceſſitie will force vs to forſake it, and as
it happened vnto king Darius, who when he had liued
a long time in delightes, drowning him ſelfe in the
ſuperfluitie of the Perſians, not once looking ſo low
as hunger and thirſt, as he fled from Alexander, and
wared verie thirſtie, drinking puddle water taken
from a riuer tainted with deade carcaſſes, he burſt
forth into this ſpeeche, that in all his life he neuer
dranche ſweéter: ſo will it befall to vs by our inordi-
nate exceſſe, and ſeeing we may beſt ſee this vertue of
frugalitie by diſcouering his contrary, we will ſpend
this forenoone in diſcourſing the follie of ſuperfluitie
or gluttonie, which Bernardino I appoint vnto your
charge, as one which we all knowe to haue beene an
enemie to ſuch diſordered bankets. Bernardino not
greatly diſcontent with this command, beganne after
the gentlemen were ſeated in the arbour, to fraime his
ſpéech in this manner. Plato the prince of the Acade-
mickes, who for his ſacred ſentences with his maiſ-
ter Socrates, amongſt all the Philoſophers, challen-
ged the name of diuine, had alwayes this saying in
his mouth, that whatſoeuer excédeth this word ne-
ceſſarie is ſuperfluitie, which genus, he deuided into
two eſpeciall partes of apparell and fare: for the laſt
whereof I am appointed to intreat, thus to the pur-
poſe. Thoſe Gentlemen which build vpon the doctrine
of the Epicures, and place their chiefe felicitie or ſum-
mum bonum in the delicacie of fare, conſider not that
gluttonie is like to the Lymons in Arabia, which be-
ing paſſing ſwéete to the mouth, are infectious in the
ſtomach, like to the floure of Amyta which glorious to

the eye greatly molesteth the smell, the swéete content or rather the bitter pleasures that procéede from these follies, feeding our lust with a tickling humour of delight, for euerie dram of pretended bliſſe presents vs a pounde of assured enormitie, for we are so blinded with the vale of this vayne follie, that forgetting our selues we runne headlong with Vlysses into Cyrces lappe, and so by tasting hir inchaunted potion, suffer our selfe to be like beasts transformed into sundrie shapes, for that was the meaning Homer aimed at by the Metamorphosis, saying: some were chaunged into Lyons as by dronkennesse made furious, some into Apes, whom wine had made pleasaunt, seme into swine, whose brutishe manner bewrayed their imperfection by sléeping in their pottes, comparing the alteration of men by ouermuch drinke to no other but a bestiall chaunge of their natures, besides this discourcrie Galen, Hypocrates and other learned Phisitians approue it the source from whence all diseases and euill dispositions of the body do flow, for sayth Plutarch we are sicke of those things whereof we doe liue, and by our naturall disposition are wholy giuē to health, if the disorder of our diet did not infringe the perfect temperature of our complexions. Homer going about to prooue the immortalitie of the Goddes, and that they dye not, groundeth his argument vpon this, because they eate not, as if he woulde argue, that as eating and drinking maintaines life, so they are the efficient causes of death, and that more dye of gluttonie than of hunger, hauing oft more care to digest meate than care to get it. Seneca sayd that the Phisitians in his time cried out that life was shorte and art long, that complaint was made of nature, that shee had graunted vnto beastes to liue fiue or sixe ages, and to limite

mans

mans dayes but the length of a spanne, which notwithstanding, being so short and momentarie, was oft consumd in excesse, drawing on death by our owne desires, and offering vp our gorged stomaches vnto Atropos as sacrifice to intreat that the date of our yeares bee vntimely preuented, so that (as the wise man sayth) more perishe by surfet than by the sword, vnto whome (sayth Salomon) falleth woe, affliction, sorrowe, strife, teares, redneſſe of the eyes, and diseases? Euen to them that sit long at the wine, which at the first pleaseth both the eye and the taſt, but at last stingeth as deadly as a scorpion.

Heraclytus was of this opinion that the insatiate appetite of gluttonie doth obscure the interiour vertues of the minde, oppressing the diuine parte of man with a confused chaos of sundrie delicates, that as the sunne eclipsed with darke and vndigested vapours, hath not the perfection of his brightneſſe, so the bodie ouercharged with superfluitie of meates, hath the senses so sotted, as they are not able to pierce by contemplation into the Metaphysicall secreates of anie honourable science. Innumerable also be dissolute fashions and wicked enormities that spring from gluttony and dronkenneſſe, for where this follie is predominant, there is the minde subiect vnto lust, anger, sloth, adulterie, loue, and all other vices that are subiectes of the sensuall part: for as the olde Poet sayth,

Sine Cerere & Baccho friget Venus.

And by the way I remember certaine verses written by our countriman Dante to this effect.

Il vitio chi conduce:

Englished thus:

A monster seated in the midst of men,]
Which daily fed is neuer satiat,

A hollow gulfe of vild ingratitude,
Which for his food vouchſafes not pay of thankes,
But ſtill doth claime a debt of due expence,
From hence doth Venus draw the ſhape of luſt,
From hence Mars raiſeth bloud and ſtratagemes,
The wracke of wealth the ſecret foe to life,
The ſword that haſtneth on the date of death,
The ſureſt friend to phiſicke by diſeaſe,
The pumice that defaceth memorie,
The miſty vapour that obſcures the light,
And brighteſt beames of ſcience glittring ſunne,
And doth eclipſe the minde with ſluggiſh thoughtes,
The monſter that afoordes this curſed brood,
And makes commixture of theſe dyer miſhaps,
Is but a ſtomach ouerchargd with meates,
That takes delight in endleſſe gluttony.

Well did Dante note in theſe verſes the ſundrie miſchiefes that procéde from this folly, ſéing what expéces to the purſe, what diſeaſes to the perſon, what ruine to common wealth, what ſubuerſion of eſtates, what miſerie to princes haue inſued by this inſatiate ſinne of gluttonie: We read of the Emperour Vitellius Spynter that he was ſo much giuen to ſuperfluity and exceſſe, that at one ſupper he was ſerued with two thouſand ſeuerall kind of fiſhes, and with ſeauen thouſande flying foules, but the heauens ſtorming at ſuch an inſatiable monſter, that ſo highly abuſed the benefites of God, conſpired his ouerthrow, for Veſpaſian did not onely diſpoſſeſſe him of the imperial Diademe, but cauſed him to be publikly executed in Rome. Dionyſius the younger from gluttony fell to tyrannie vntill he was exiled for his wickednelle out of Sicilia. Mulcaſſes king of Thunis was ſo drowned in pleaſure & delight of ſuperfluous banketting, that in the midſt of his miſeries when the Emperour Charles

had

had forſaken him, and left him of a king almoſt the outcaſt of the world, yet as Paulus Iouius rehearſeth, he ſpent a hundreth crownes vppon the dreſſing of a peacocke, whereat his muſitians playing, he couered his eyes to reape the greater content: but the iudgement of God ſpedely followed this vaine delicacie, for within two dayes after his owne ſonnes put out his eyes with barres of hoat iron. Infinit alſo were the examples might be brought of dronckenneſſe, and of his diſcommoditie: of Alexander how he prepared crownes for them that excéded in that filthie vice, and made a great cup which he called Alexander, after his owne name, wherein he did carrous to his nobles, but Caliſtenes his deare friend refuſing, & saying: for drinking in Alexander I will not ſtand in nede of Eſculapius, he fell into ſuch furie, that he commanded him to be put in an iron cage with dogges, which Caliſtenes not brooking poiſoned him ſelfe. At an other dronken feaſt he ſlue his faithfull friende Clytus, a worthie captaine and a counſellor, to whome hee had ſo many times béene beholding for his life: but afterwarde when he came to him ſelfe, hee was ſo grieued for this fact, that he ſought to ſhorten his dayes with his owne ſword, and ſpent many dayes in continuall teares for his friende, whereby we euidently ſée how the beſt that inſueth of this folly is ſhame and repentance. This meant Heraclytus to teache his countriemen, when after a mutinous ſedition was appeaſed, and the commons demanded of him, what antydote were beſt to preuent the like miſfortune, preſently gat him vp to a place where the magiſtrate vſed to deliuer Orations to the people, and there in ſteade of pronouncing ſome eloquent and learned diſcourſe, only beganne to fæde on a morſell of browne bread, & to drinke a glaſſe of cléere water, thus ſetting downe a

golden precept by silence, for by this he signified vnto them that as long as daintinesse and riot and needelesse expences flourished in the citie, so long shoulde they stande in danger of ciuill sedition, but this vaine excesse abolished a peaceable and perpetuall quiet was like to insue: if this counsell of Heraclitus were requisit in a monarchie, what neede haue wee of suche necessarie principles, in whose common wealth nothing is glorious, but superfluitie of foode and apparell. Let me borrow a word with you (quoth Peratio) in this, for in deede if men thoroughly consider the vaine delight diuerse of our Florentines tooke in trimming and decking out the bodie, which Epaminondas called the prison of the soule, we shall bee at length forced to confesse with Erasmus, that they rather serue to whet the eyes of the beholders to wicked desires, than vnto anie honest opinion or conceit.

Epictetus gaue this onely precept vnto his countrimen at his death: Friendes (quoth he) decke not your bodie with curious superfluitie of apparell, but paint them with temperaunce, for the one is but a shadowe that bleareth the eyes, the other an ornament that inricheth the minde, which counsell the ancient Monarkes and Chiefetaines of the world foretaught vs: for Augustus famous through the whole worlde for his fortunes, and honoured for his maiestie, neuer ware other garmentes than suche as his wife and daughters made, and those verie moderate. Agesilaus king of Lacedemonia had but one coat for winter and summer. Epaminondas generall captaine of the Thebans, was contented with one only gowne all the yeare long: this simplicitie and moderate vse of apparell in such worthie personages, might well serue vs for presidentes, but that vanity hath so long

lulled our senses a sléep with pleasure, as the custome of the fault hath taken away the féeling of the fact. Well sir (quoth Bernardino) this belongeth to your discourse of pride, and therefore againe to our purpose which séeing I haue confirmed with sufficient reasons & examples to be an inordinate vice and more follie I will nowe also ratifie it with a verie briefe and short historie.

Bernardinos Tale.

N the citie of Ausburg in Germanie there ruled not long since a duke whose name for reuerence I conceale, & therefore will tearme him Don Antonio, a man of very honorable parentage, but so giuen to the filthy vice of drunkennesse as he almost subuerted the state of the citie, with his gluttonies. For oftimes he fell into tyrannous and barbarous cruelties, as one that had martiall law in his power, and other whiles gaue wrong sentence against the innocent, as his humour fitted, which excesse had led him. But aboue all the rest a poore man hauing a matter to plead before him, which he was acertained by law should goe on his side, Don Antonio comming drunke to the place of iudgement, sléeping in his sursets, neuer considered the equitie of the cause, but gaue sentence against the poore man, and condemned him in so great a summe, as scarse all his moueables were able to discharge, well the verdict giuen he had no other remedy but to abide the censure of the iust iudge, & to make sale of all that he had to answer his condemnation: which done so little remayned that hee had nothing left to maintaine his wife and child, wherupon pouertie being the heauiest burden

a man can beare, presented vnto him a glasse of many miseries, which were apparant to insue by distressed want, wherein after the poore wretch had a long while gazed, he fell to despaire, that flinging into his backe side, he toke the halter out of his stable, and running into the field went to hang himselfe in a thicket hard adioyning to his house, where yet a little entering into consideration with himselfe, he began thus to debate.

Infortunate Rustico, for so we will terme him, how art thou oppressed with sundrie passions, distres baiting thee on to despaire, and the care of thy soule willing thee rather to choose pouertie than hell. Well did Tymon of Athens see the miserie of mans life, when hee bought a peece of ground, wherein hee placed gibbets, and spent his time in such desperate Philosophie, as to perswade his friendes to hang themselues, so to auoide the imminent perilles of innumerable misfortunes, so Rustico seeme thou an Athenian, be one of Tymons friendes, listen to his doctrine, follow his counsell, preuent miserie with death. But alas this is not sufficient, for in freeing thy selfe from calamitie, thou leauest thy wife and children in a thousand sorrowes, and further thou cuttest off all hope of reuenges. Reuenge, yea reuenge Rustico, for assure thy selfe, if thou liuest not, yet God will reuenge, haue two sinnes escaped vnpunished, hath not the accursed duke to his drunken messe added iniustice, yes and therefore deserues to bee reuenged with thine owne hande, let examples arme thee to the like attempt. Philip king of Macedonia was slaine by a meane Gentleman Pausanias, because he would not let him haue iustice against Antipater, who had offred him wrong. Demetrius hauing receiued many requests of his poore subiects, as he passed ouer a bridge

threw

threwe all their supplications into the water, for which cauſe hee became ſo odious to his ſubiects, that they ſuffered Pyrrhus his enemie to driue him out of his kingdoume without battell. Ferdinando the fourth putting to death a knight more for anger than anie iuſt cauſe, the Gentleman at the ſentence, cried out: Iniurious Emperor, I cite thee to appeare before the tribunall ſeate of God, to anſwere this wrong within thirtie daies, on the laſt of which expired tearme the Emperour died. Then comfort thy ſelfe Ruſtico, let not deſpaire arme thee to ſuch an heathenish reſolution, rather liue to reuenge than die to double thy miſerie, and ſeeing the duke hath dealt thus hardly, vſe him as Alexander Seuerus handled his ſecretarie, who beeing a caterpiller in the Court, and ſelling the verie fauourable lookes of his maiſter for coyne, promiſing poore men to proſecute their ſutes, when he neuer mooued their cauſe: at laſt in requitall of this treacherous dealing was tied to a poſt and choaked with ſmoake, hauing a proclamation made before him by ſound of trumpet, that they which ſell ſmoake ſhoulde ſo periſhe with ſmoake, the poore man from theſe plaintes fell into teares, that ouercome with the paſſions hee fell a ſleepe, where in a dreame was by God reuealed vnto him the meanes of reuenge, as ſoone as he awoake and called vnto minde the viſion, thinking it to be no fantaſticke illuſion of the braine, but a ſtricte commaunde from the heauenly powers, preſently wente home and wared contrarye vnto his woonted cuſtome very merrye, frequenting dayly the Dukes Palace, where giuing him ſelfe vnto drinking he became in time to bee in ſome fauour with the Duke, who neuer remembred that hee ſat in iudgement againſt the poore man. On a time ſeing that opportunitie

fauoured him, he requested the Duke that as he went on hunting, he would take the paines to visit his poore house, where he should finde no daintie fare, but onely that he durst promise a cup of good wine. This worde was enough to perswade the Duke to a greater matter, so that he granted to come. The poore man glad that his purpose was like to take effect, went home and made a sale of all that hee had euen to his verie shirt, to the great sorow of his wife, and wonder of his neighbours which knew not his pretence. As sone as he had prettilie furnished himself with mony, he bought great store of excellent and delicate viandes of strong and pleasant wine, and conuated them home to his house, whether within two daies after the Duke foresent his cooke, certifieng the poore man that he would dine with him, who prouiding most sumptuous fare, set all his wealth vpon the table at one dinner, and intertained the Duke with such a heartie welcome, that he not onely wondered where Rustico got such store of victuals, but gaue great thankes for his good chære. Rustico serued in wine in such abundaunce, that don Antonio fell to his olde vice of dronkennes, and in such sort, as he neuer tooke so much in his life. The poore man seeing him take his drinke so frely, went to one of his Trumpetters, and told him that the Duke commanded hee shoulde by sounde of Trumpet presently summon all the Citizens to appeare at his house, eyther without delaie or excuse. Which commande, hee forthwith executed: and the Burgomaisters & chiefe men of the Citie mervailing what this should meane, yet hasting to the house of Rustico, they found a scaffolde erected at the doore, where after they had stayed a while, Rustico came forth, and began to speake in this manner.

Worthie Citizens and Burgomasters of Auspourg.

I knowe you meruaile what the cause of your comming is, especially seing mee that am poore and vnlettered prepare to offer an Oration to such politike gouernours, but it is the care of my Countrie, & especially of this Citie, which is like to ruinate through the want of the possession of a perfect magistrate, that driues me to this resolute and desperate attempte: The dutie of a magistrate, as I haue heard, a certaine Philosopher should set downe, consisteth in three especiall pointes, in ruling, teaching and iudging, that hee be wise to gouerne, vertuous to giue insample, and impartiall to iudge: for as Cicero saith, sooner shall the course of nature faile, than the subiects will leaue to follow the steps of their Prince. If then that common wealth be happy that is gouerned by such a king, in what distresse is that Citie that wanteth such a magistrate, and hath one that neither ruleth, teacheth, or doth iustice, but censures all things by the pallet. Philip of Macedonia béeing desired by an olde woman to heare her complaint, answered, hee had no leasure. Then, quoth she, be not King, meaning that a Prince ought to haue more care ouer the affaires of the common wealth, then ouer his owne priuate busines: Then worthie Citizens, what may that Citie saie, whose gouernour is addicted to his own pleasure, that delights not in iustice, but in superfluity, that honors not the seate of iudgement with Philosophie, but poluteth the place with dronkenesse, that studieth not in the lawe, but his library is in the kitchin, that séeketh not to learne wisdome, but to gorge his stomack with delicates, such a one, worthie Citisens haue we, for our Duke, our gouernour, our magistrate, and as hee vttered that word, his poore wife and children dragged the Duke vpon the scaffolde, who was all besmeared in his owne vomite, & resembling rather a brute beast

then a man, bred loathsomnes to all the people: which the poore man taking for his aduantage, cried out: See Burgomasters and Citizens of Auspourg, your duke, your magistrate, your gouernour, who is come vpon the scaffolde to heare the complaints of the widow and fatherlesse, and to minister iudgement. This is the the man that condemned me in the halfe of my goods, by iniustice, and the other halfe I haue solde to present you this spectacle: the one halfe he gaue awaie beeing wonken, and the other this daie her hath consumed in gluttony. Now citizens, shame you not at such a sight, what shall Germanie, France, Italy, and all the bordering Cities report of our towne? What straunger will desire to traffique where there is such a glutton? What Citie can ioy where there is such a gouernour? If you suffer this, the common wealth is like to ruinate, and you and your children like to beare the burthen of a superfluous tyrant: See what Rustico hath done for his Countrie now vse him as you please. The Burgomaisters by a general assent, gaue commandement that he should be vncouered vpon the scaffold til he came to himself, and in the meane time they assembled themselues and determined his exile. The duke after he had taken two or three houres sleepe, finding himselfe vpon an open scaffolde, was ashamed. But hearing what had happened to him by the meanes of Rustico, and how the Burgomaisters had resolued on his banishment, as one feeling the horrour of the fact, desperatly went into the poore mans backe side and hanged himselfe. Which newes being brought to the Burgomaisters, with a generall voice they created Rustico gouernour of the Citie.

This

This short and sweete tale of Bernardino greatlie pleased the Countie and the rest of the companie, all praising the pollicie of the poore man, that had made so speedie and sharpe a reuenge. Well, quoth the olde Countesse, wee haue so long discoursed of gluttonie, that our simple cheere hauing so good a sauce as hunger, will proue verie good delicates, therefore Gentlemen, seeing wee must either make our Cooke cholerike, or else leaue our present parle, let vs at this time not disturbe his patience, but hie vs in to dinner, and repast being taken, willingly wee will continue our discourse. Then seignior Farneze and the rest hauing their stomackes armed to such a combat, willingly obeied, and so for this time we will leaue them.

FINIS.